

Connecting West Park

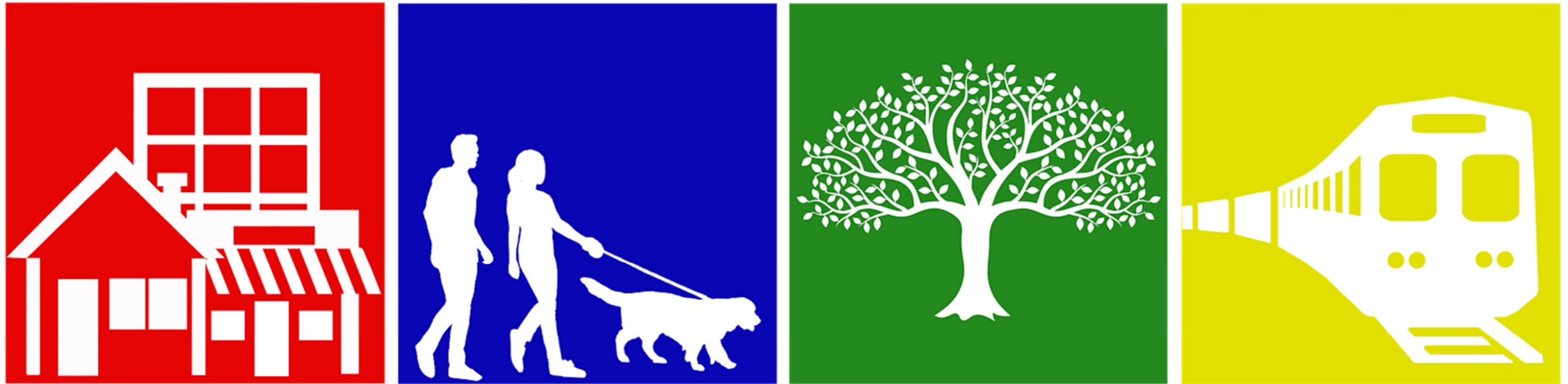
The Viking Planning Group

UST 611 Planning Studio

Spring 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction and Executive Summary	3	3. Market Study	31	7. Strategies for Implementation	91
1. Vision Statement and Goals	6	3.1 Single & Two-Family Housing Analysis	32	7.1 Implementation Strategy	92
1.1 Vision Statement and Mission	7	3.2 Multi-Family Market Analysis	35	7.2 Funding Sources	96
1.2 Project Goals	7	3.3 Office Market Analysis	36	Planning Team	99
2. Existing Conditions	8	3.4 Industrial Market Analysis	38	Appendices	100
2.1 History of West Park	9	3.5 Retail Market Analysis	39		
2.2 Demographics	11	3.6 Highest and Best Use Analysis	40		
2.3 Current Land Use and Zoning	14	4. Community Engagement	42		
2.4 Environmental Conditions	16	4.1 Overview and Methodology	43		
2.5 Transportation and Mobility	20	4.2 Equity Considerations	43		
2.6 Crime	26	4.3 Survey Results	44		
2.7 SWOT Analysis	27	4.4 Stakeholder Interview Results	48		
2.8 Existing Planning Studies	28	5. Conceptual Frameworks	50		
		5.1 History of Middle Neighborhoods	51		
		5.2 History of Transit-Oriented Development	54		
		5.3 Transit-Oriented Development Case Studies	55		
		6. Recommendations	58		
		6.1 The Kmart Site	60		
		6.2 West Park Station	68		
		6.3 Lorain Ave. Corridor	81		



Introduction and Executive Summary

Introduction

The Viking Planning Group was engaged by Kamm's Corners Development Corporation to conduct a planning study of the area bound roughly by Triskett Rd., W. 140th St., and the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks, which run to the northeast.

First, the study involves an analysis of existing neighborhood conditions, including history, demographics, land use and zoning, transportation, and other factors. Second, a market analysis was completed to analyze the potential for various types of development, including office, commercial, residential, and industrial. A comprehensive community engagement process was undertaken, involving surveys of residents and visitors, and interviews of stakeholders.

Finally, recommendations were issued for three separate focus areas in the wider study area: the West Park RTA station, the Lorain Ave. Corridor, and the site of the former Kmart store and surrounding parcels at Lorain Ave. and W. 150th St.

The results from our analyses and our recommendations are described in the following pages.

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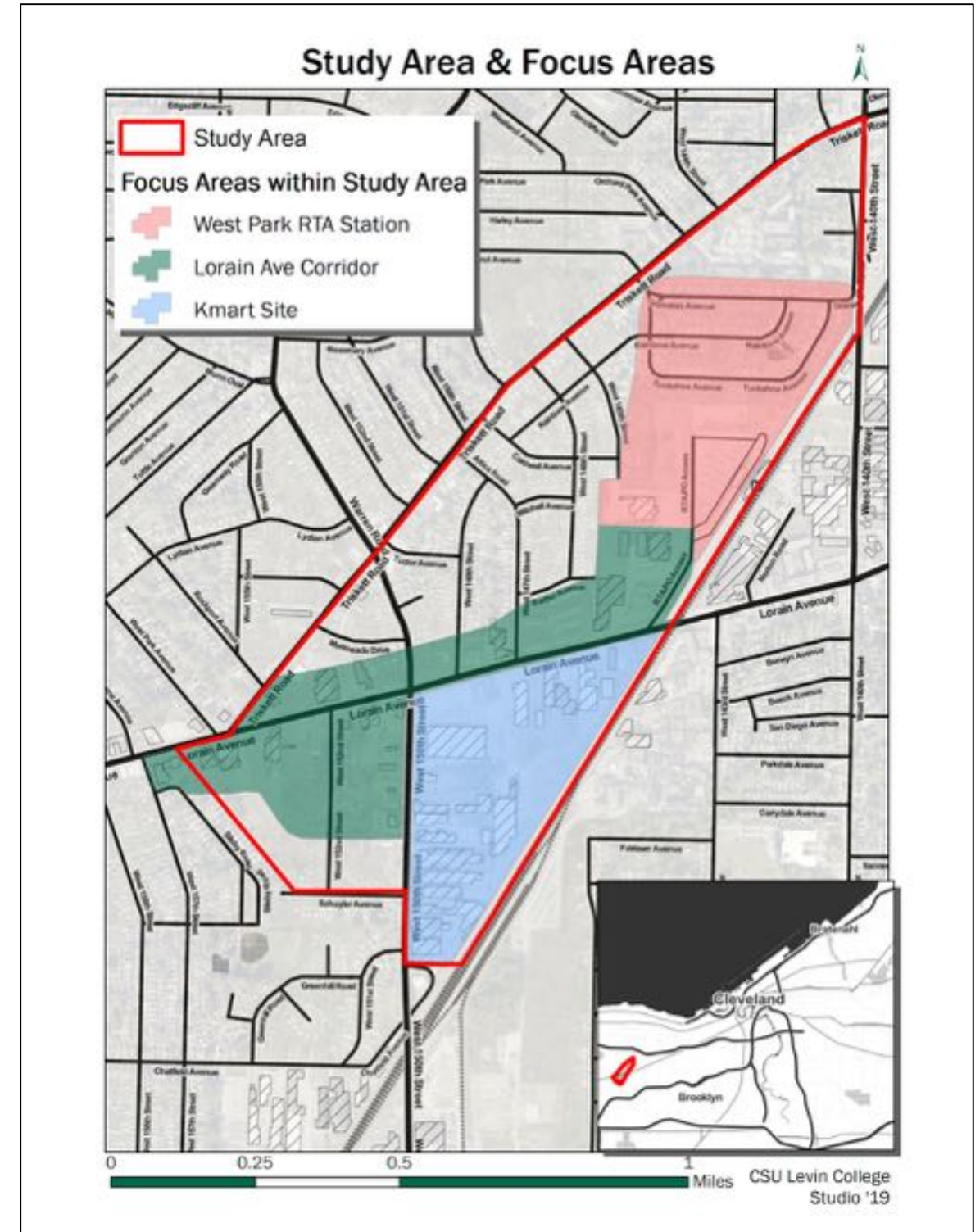
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Executive Summary

West Park is a strong neighborhood on the west side of Cleveland, Ohio. The neighborhood is anchored by a major transit-stop, the Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital, the Cleveland Metro Parks, and Kamms' Corners, a historic retail intersection, Kamm's Corners. Homes in West Park range from apartments to turn-of-the century historic brick single-family homes. But as with many neighborhoods across the region, the changing retail landscape has shifted the fabric of the neighborhood, particularly in the center of West Park on Lorain Ave. The closure of the local Kmart and surrounding retail space at the intersection of Lorain Ave. and W. 150th St. has created holes along the corridor, with the potential to negatively impact the vitality of the neighborhood.

In the spring of 2019, the Kamm's Corners Development Corporation (KCDC) partnered with 20 Viking Planners (VP) at the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University (CSU) to develop a plan for West Park. The focus of the redevelopment plan was the 0.7-mile stretch of Lorain Ave. Corridor between Triskett Rd. and the West Park RTA Station. With the recent closure of the Kmart in 2018, the goal was to examine West Park and its surrounding landscape and create a new plan that would breathe life back into the neighborhood, build upon existing assets and explore future opportunities for development on the newly vacant Kmart site and near a precious resource, the West Park RTA station.

KCDC is the Community Development Corporation (CDC) for the entire West Park neighborhood. Their mission is simple:

To facilitate the development and promotion of the West Park neighborhood. In coordination with our partners, we will engage with residents, businesses, institutions, and visitors in elevating the quality of life in our community.

Through multiple meetings, tours, and investigations into the neighborhood of West Park, the Viking Planning Group was able to identify the ethical framework for moving forward to create a redevelopment plan for West Park.

Mission

The Viking Planning Group will engage neighborhoods and communities to create sustainable plans that encourage community innovation, economic development, social inclusion, equitable development and improved quality of life.

Vision

The Connecting West Park Plan provides a foundation for community development that focuses on sustainable improvements to encourage business creation, quality housing choices, infrastructure reinvestment, recreational access, public safety, and community pride.

Values

- Responsibility to the public interest
- Environmental sustainability
- Social and economic inclusion of all persons
- Planning based on ethical standards

History and Existing Conditions

The Viking Planning Group explored the history of West Park by consulting multiple sources. First through literary reviews of key topics, such as transit-oriented development, middle neighborhoods, and environmental conditions, a baseline of knowledge was established for the project.

Experts from the neighborhood and the fields of planning, environmental health, refugee and immigrant populations, stormwater management, and transportation presented and assisted the Viking Planning Group in developing frameworks for analyzing the current landscape of West Park.

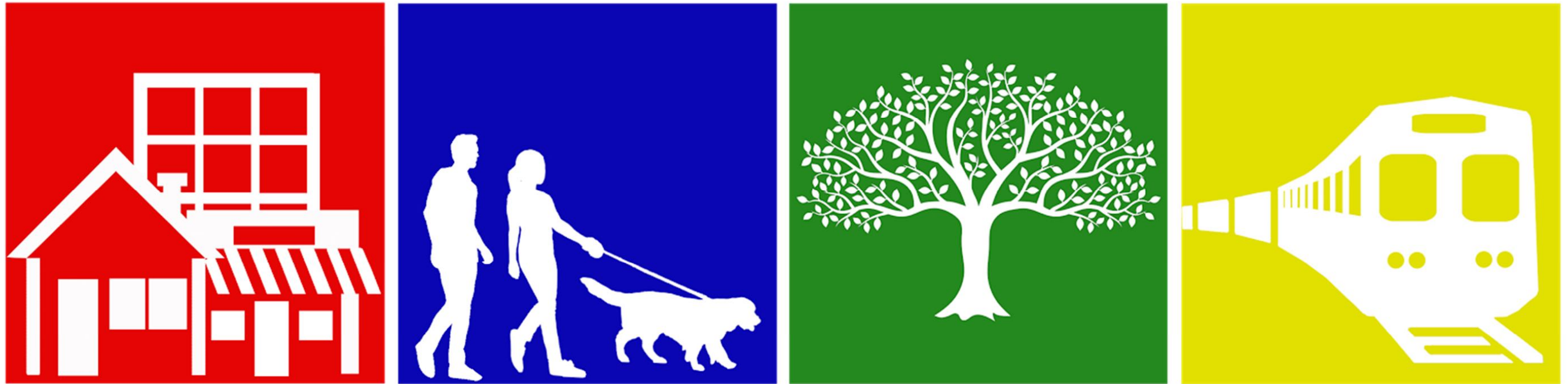
Community Engagement

Over 2,000 surveys and 20 key informant and stakeholder interviews provided a deep dive into the strengths, weaknesses

opportunities, and threats of the neighborhood. Feedback included the opinions and thoughts of both residents and visitors.

Planning and Implementation

Upon gaining a deeper understanding of the study area, the Viking Planning Group divided the plan into three sites, focusing on the Kmart site, the Lorain Ave. Corridor itself, and the West Park RTA Station. Segmenting the study area allowed smaller groups to zero in on the relevant survey results, and prepare a set of recommendations for improvement. Each site has a set of recommendations, a brief financial analysis, and implementation strategies to compel forward progress. A few of the major highlights from each site include the redevelopment of the Kmart site pursuing both a major attractor, such as a movie theater, as well as light industrial uses to support the high demand in the Cleveland market for warehousing and the growing world of e-commerce. The Lorain Ave. Corridor should focus on a new streetscape that connects the existing improvements nearer to Kamm's Corners, and the bicycle infrastructure in-place heading east down Lorain Ave. Finally, the West Park RTA station should take advantage of the large amount of existing land and pursue senior housing, in both apartment and townhome styles, which allows residents to age in place, in the neighborhood that they have always known as home.



Vision Statement and Goals

Vision Statement and Mission

The Connecting West Park Plan provides a foundation for community development that focuses on sustainable improvements to encourage business creation, quality housing choices, infrastructure reinvestment, recreational access, public safety, and community pride.

The Viking Planning Group will engage neighborhoods and communities to create sustainable plans that encourage community innovation, economic development, social inclusion, equitable development, and improved quality of life.

Project Goals

When implementing the goal to improve economic opportunities, our study recommends creating new marketing strategies for business development and engaging the community to showcase West Park's unique history and diversity. We recommend working with local universities to identify and attract startups and other businesses into West Park. Moving forward, we recommend expanding the existing efforts to teach West Park's refugee community essential skills for employment. Finally, we recommend encouraging local businesses to prioritize the hiring of neighborhood residents.

Goal 1

Improve economic opportunities for all members of the community

- Neighborhood Branding
- Business Incubation
- Job Creation
- Business Retention
- Workforce Development

Goal 2

Promote a diverse mix of housing types for existing and future residents

- Aging in Place
- Affordability

Goal 3

Foster a diverse, mixed-income, transit-oriented community

- Quality of Life
- Housing
- Environmental
- Transit and Mobility

Goal 4

Enhance the vitality of the Lorain Avenue Corridor

- Land Use
- Streetscaping
- Activity Nodes

Goal 5

Encourage redevelopment along the Lorain Avenue Corridor

- Reinvestment
- Adaptive Reuse
- Supportive Use Retail

Goal 6

Support Physical and Social Cohesion

- Gateways
- Lighting
- Streetscaping

Goal 7

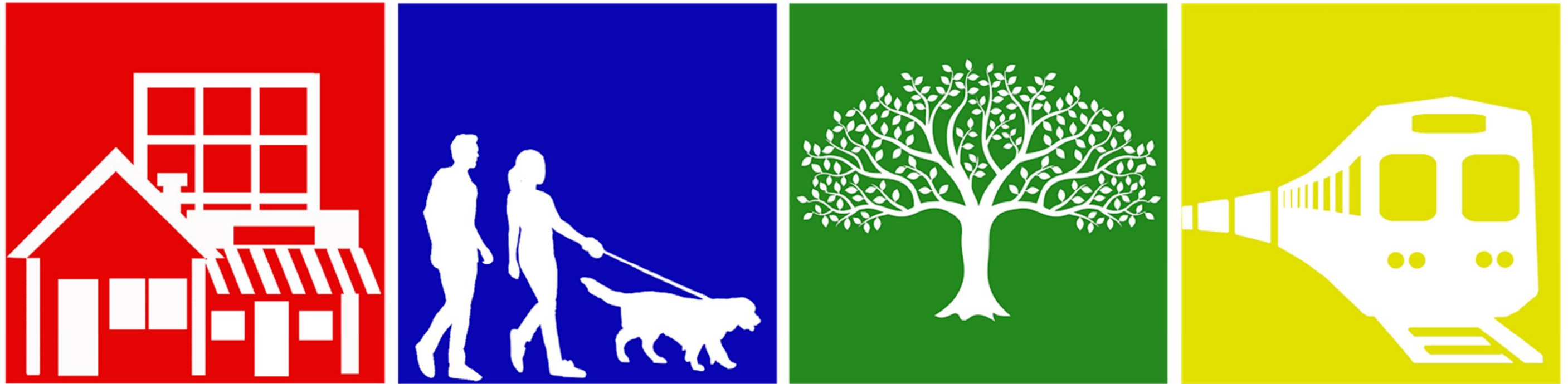
Develop a modernized strategy for aging housing

- Model House
- Concept Design and Standards
- Neighborhood Branding

Goal 8

Increase entertainment, recreation, and shopping options for all residents of West Park

- Reactivation
- Kmart Redevelopment
- Create West Park as a Destination



Existing Conditions

History of West Park

Early History

The West Park neighborhood occupies 12.5 square miles on the west side of Cleveland.¹ Originally founded in 1819 as Rockport Township, the fertile soil, proximity to the river, and clay deposits created the foundations for an agriculturally focused township.² John M. West was the founder of West Park and owned over 700 acres of land on Lorain Ave. He created a public space with a picnic area and pond named “West Park”. Eventually, the name was applied to the community as a whole.³

Another important figure to the neighborhood was Oswald Kamm, the owner of a grocery store at the corner of Rocky River Dr. and Lorain Ave. As the intersection grew and became more established the name “Kamm’s Corners” was applied. This intersection was, and continues to be, the heart of the West Park neighborhood.³

Historic maps reveal that West Park developed later than other parts of Cleveland, with growth occurring exclusively along its arterial roads.⁴ By 1913, religious and economic institutions were established along the river: St. Joe’s Academy, Covent of Poor Clares, the Franciscan Monastery, The Cleveland Southwestern & Columbus Railway Company, and Car House. Moving east to Kamm’s Corners, the village had a post office, a racetrack, and a feed mill. Lorain Ave. featured the Rockport Club House and Puritas and Oils. Finally, industry focused along the railroad: the Electric Locomotive and Car Industry. Additionally, Darnsville School was east of the tracks and Forbes Varnish Company south of tracks.⁴

West Park, remained an independent township, separate from the City of Cleveland, until its annexation in 1923. West Park was the last major suburb to merge with the city.⁵

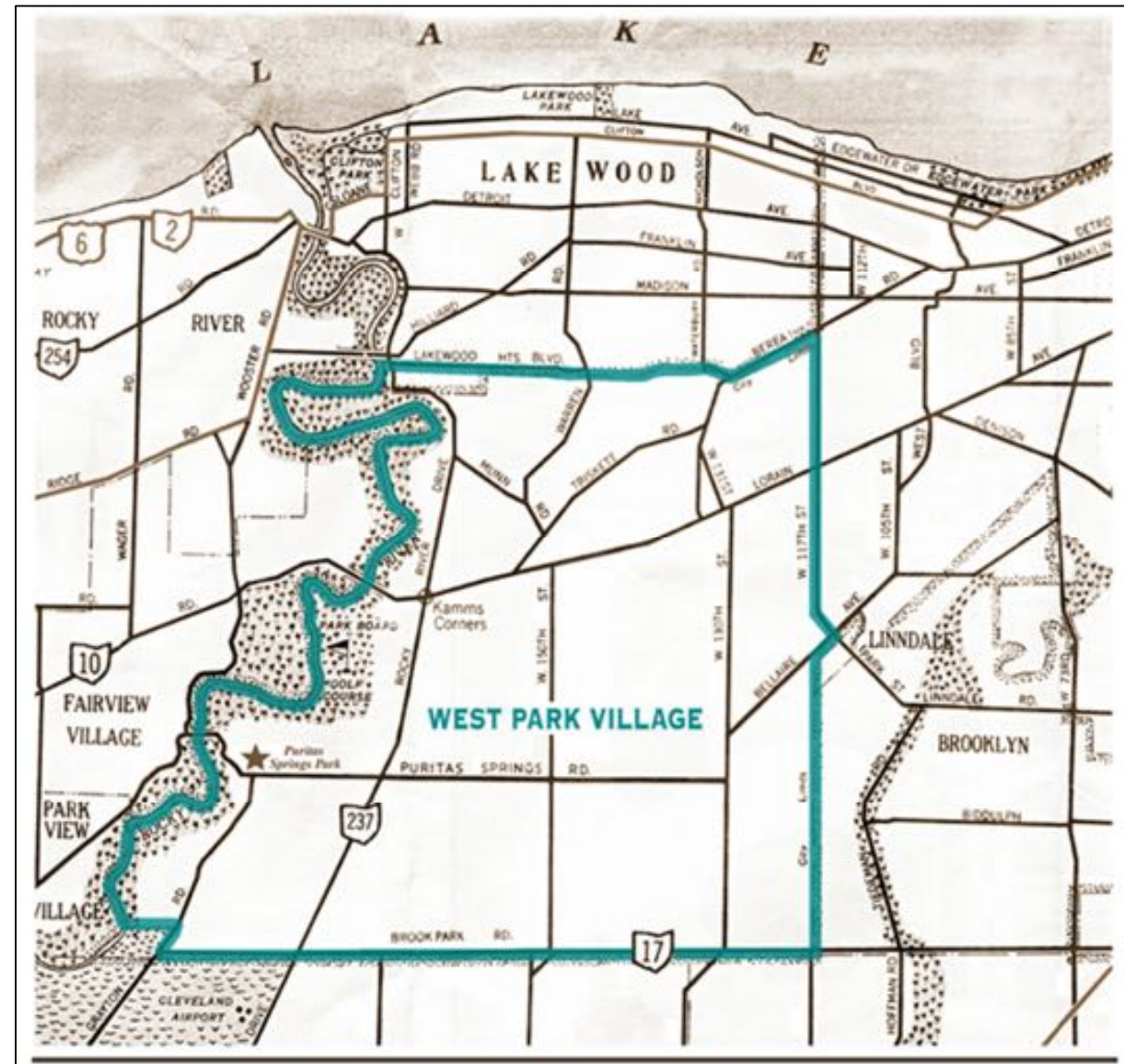


Figure 1. Historic Map of West Park, 1913⁵

¹ West Park. (2019). *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*. Retrieved from <https://case.edu/ech/articles/w/west-park>

² Rockport. (2019). *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*. Retrieved from <https://case.edu/ech/articles/r/rockport>

³ West Park. (2019). *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*. Retrieved from <https://case.edu/ech/articles/w/west-park>

⁴ Cleveland Historic Maps. (1912). [Digitized Historical Maps]. *USDA FSA Cleveland Public Library*. Retrieved from <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=ddb0ee6134d64de4adaaa3660308abfd>

⁵ West Park’s Origins. Retrieved from <http://www.westparkhistory.org/about/west-parks-origin/>

20th Century to Now

After officially joining the City of Cleveland, West Park immediately benefitted from the “interurban” transit service along Lorain Ave. The Cleveland Electric Railway Company's streetcar line conducted service out to Kamm’s Corners beginning in 1923.⁶ As with many Cleveland Neighborhoods, West Park experience population growth between the 1920s and the 1960s but would later face significant population decline moving towards the turn of the century.⁶

Historic Landmarks

There were 40 identified landmarks within the region: eight houses of worship; seven parks or recreation sites, six social service sites, four educational institutions, three cultural centers, two transportation hubs, two health care centers, one public service, and six additional landmarks pertaining to industry, commercial, and food.⁷

West Park Landmarks

Name	Address	Type
Alger Cemetery	16710 Bradgate Ave.	Cemetary
Beth Israel-West Temple	14308 Triskett Rd.	Religious
Bethany English Lutheran Church	15460 Triskett Rd.	Religious
Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital	18101 Lorain Ave.	Health Care
Conrad's Tire Express & Total Car Care	14577 Lorain Ave.	Industrial
Drakefield Park		Recreation
Gunning Park Recreation Center	16700 Puritas Ave.	Recreation
Gunning Playground		Recreation
Holy Cross Lutheran Church	4260 Rocky River Dr.	Religious
Impett Park	3207 W 153rd St.	Recreation
Kamden Village Apartments	14590 Lorain Ave.	Residential
Kiwanis Club of West Park	3853 West 168th St.	Social Service
K-Mart	14901 Lorain Ave.	Commercial
Knights of Columbus West Park Council 2790	3556 W. 130th	Religious
Larchwood Village Retirement Community	4110 Rocky River Dr.	Social Service
Laura's Home Women Crisis Center	18120 Puritas Ave.	Social Service
Munn Park	16401 Munn Rd.	Recreation
Newton D Baker Elementary School	3690 W 159th St.	Education
North Star Lodge # 638	15500 Triskett Rd.	Religious
Ohio Pipe & Supply	14615 Lorain Ave.	Industrial
Our Lady of Angels School	3644 Rocky River Dr.	Education
Riverside Park		Recreation
Rocky River Gardens Rehabilitation & Nursing Center	4102 Rocky River Dr.	Social Service
Rubin's Family Restaurant	14615 Lorain Ave.	Food
St. Joseph Academy	3470 Rocky River Dr.	Education
St. Mark Parish	15800 Montrose Ave.	Religious
St. Mel Catholic Church	14436 Triskett Rd.	Religious
The Hope Center for Refugees and Immigrants	15135 Triskett Rd.	Social Service
Tuland Park	W 144th St.	Recreation
United States Postal Service	14500 Lorain Ave.	Public Service
Valley View Elementary School	17200 Valleyview Ave.	Education
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	3791 W. 150th St.	Social Service
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)	3580 W. 140th St.	Social Service
West Park – Fairview Family YMCA	15501 Lorain Ave.	Cultural
West Park Animal Hospital	4117 Rocky River Dr.	Health Care
West Park Elim Church	15305 Triskett Rd.	Religious
West Park Historical Society	17401 Lorain Ave.	Cultural
West Park Rapid Station	Lloyd Peterson Dr.	Transportation
West Park United Church-Christ	3909 Rocky River Dr.	Religious

Figure 2. Neighborhood Landmarks (Viking Planning Group)

⁶ Neighborhood Tour: History. (2010). *Neighborhood Link*. Retrieved from <http://www.nhlink.net/neighborhoodtournew/history.php?neighborhood=kamms-corner>

⁷ Google. (2019). Google Maps. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/maps>

Demographics

The demographics of the study area in the West Park neighborhood surrounding the W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave. intersection include: real estate statistics, housing burden, income, unemployment, education, race, and vehicle use.

Real Estate and Housing Burden Statistics

Real Estate

The Study Area has moderate residential vacancy when compared to nearby census tracks. The entire area has a housing vacancy rate around 7.7-10.5 percent. Retail real estate is suffering from high or complete vacancy mainly due to the exit of Kmart from their W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave. location.⁸

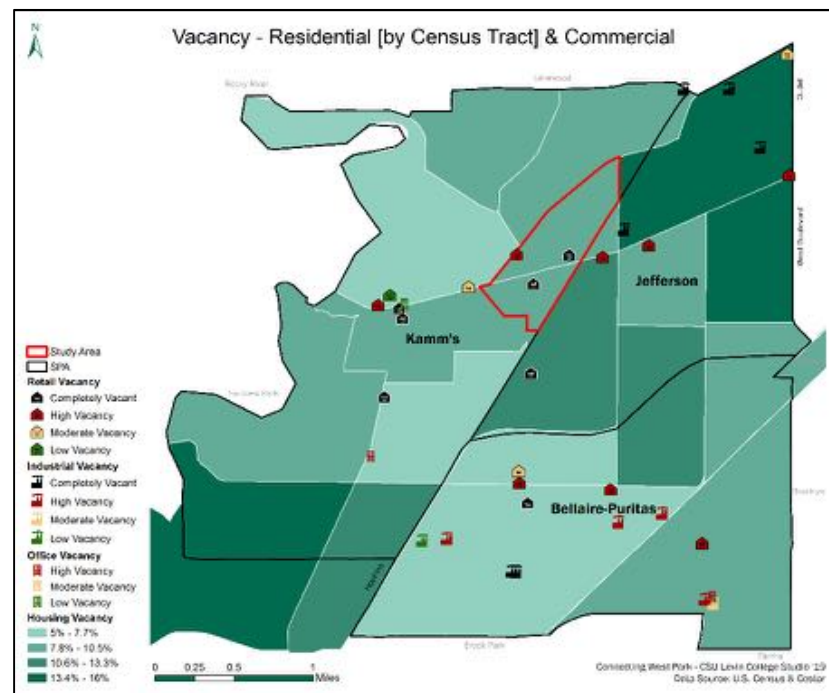


Figure 3. Vacancy (Viking Planning Group)

Housing Value

The study area is bifurcated across Lorain Ave. when looking at housing statistics. The average home value for the residences north of Lorain is between \$56,300 - \$81,525 while the home value for residences south of Lorain is between \$106,750 and \$131,975.⁹

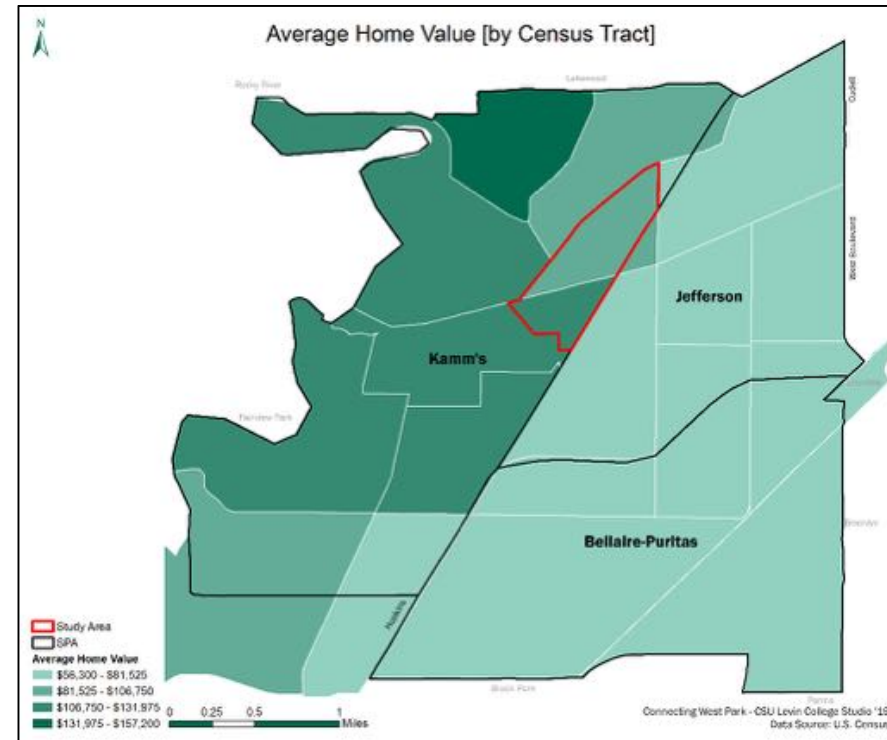


Figure 4. Home Values (Viking Planning Group)

Homeowner Housing Burden

The housing cost and housing burden follows the same trend. Homes north of Lorain Ave., have a monthly housing cost ranging between \$544.00 and \$691.25. South of Lorain, the housing cost jumps to between \$985.76 and \$1,133.00. When looking at the housing burden, the data shows that 8-17 percent of homeowners north of Lorain pay more than 30% of their household income to housing costs, while south of Lorain that percentage increases to 28.1-39 percent of households.⁹

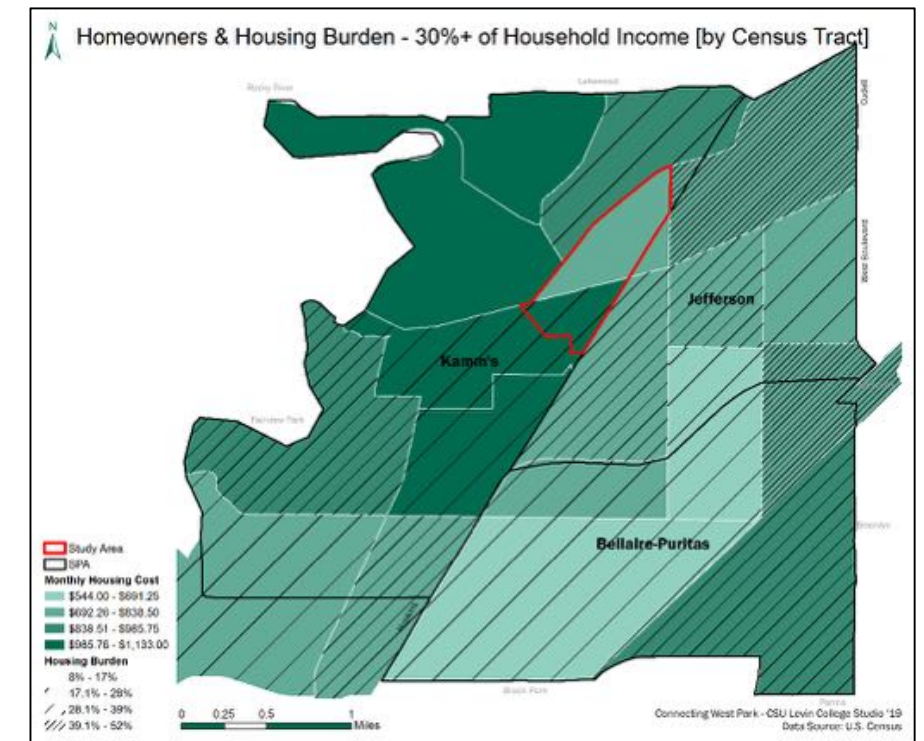


Figure 5. Owner Housing Burden (Viking Planning Group)

⁸ CoStar. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.costar.com/>

⁹ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "B2503: Financial Characteristics." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

Renters Housing Burden

Renters on the other hand face a higher housing burden north of Lorain, where 49-60 percent of the group pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing as compared to only 38-49 percent of the group that live south of Lorain. One would think without looking at the data that these trends would be reverse (the northern side of the study area paying more for housing costs) because the southern half of the study area is mainly industrial.¹⁰

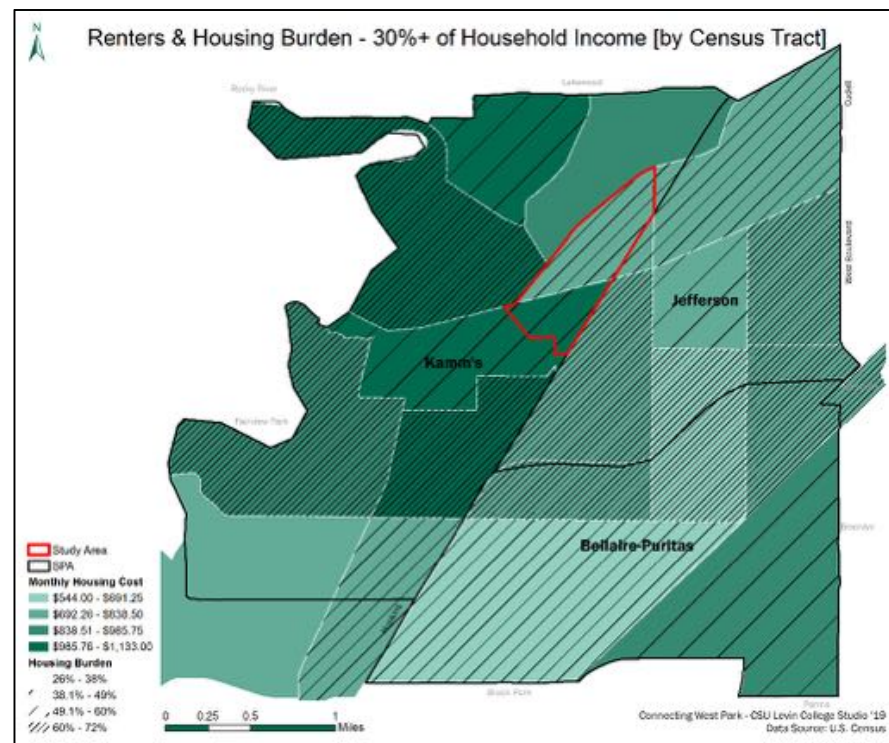


Figure 6. Renters and Housing Burden (Viking Planning Group)

Income, Unemployment, and Education

Income and Education Correlation

The data shows a clear pattern between the level of education attained by the population and the median income. There is a clear showing of lower income and educational attainment in the northern section of the project focus area which is defined as north of Lorain. The median income for that area is between \$29,001-\$40,923 and the percentage of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher is only 9.1-14 percent. South of Lorain the median income jumps to \$53,701-\$66,477 and the percentage of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher increases to 14.1-26 percent of the population.¹¹

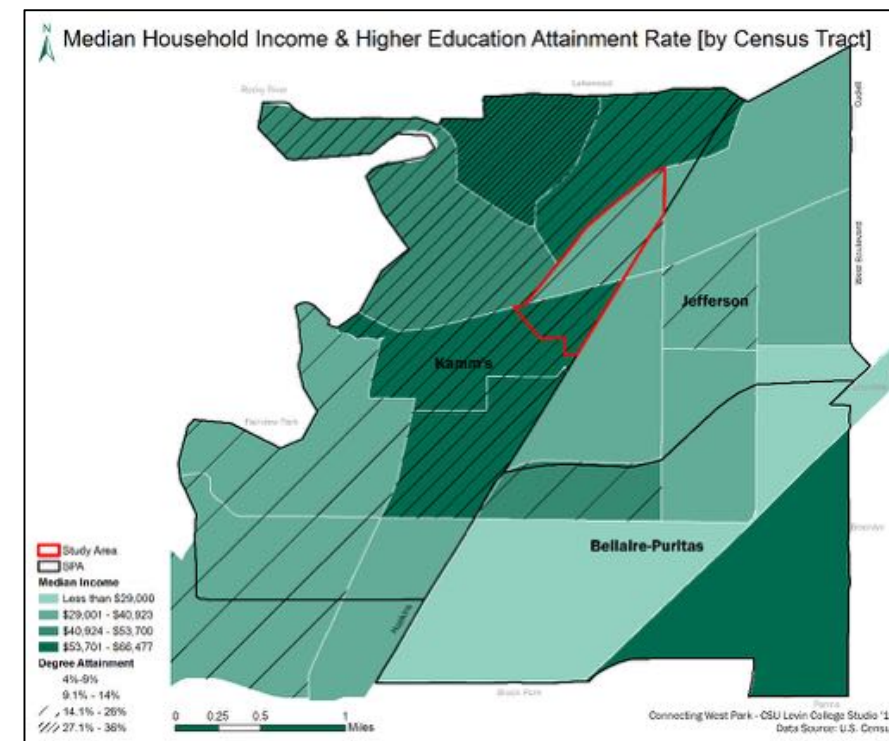


Figure 7. Income and Education (Viking Planning Group)

Unemployment

As expected, the unemployment rate and poverty rate follow the lower educational attainment and income dynamic. The northern half of the study area has an unemployment rate between 4.91-7.5 percent and a poverty rate between 10.1-17 percent. The southern half of the study area has an unemployment rate between 2.8-4.9 percent and a poverty rate of 6.1-10 percent. The higher poverty rate and lower educational attainment in the northern section of the study area is more in line with census tracts just east of the study area. Showing that Kamm's Corners is an outlier when compared with most of the surrounding census tracks.¹²

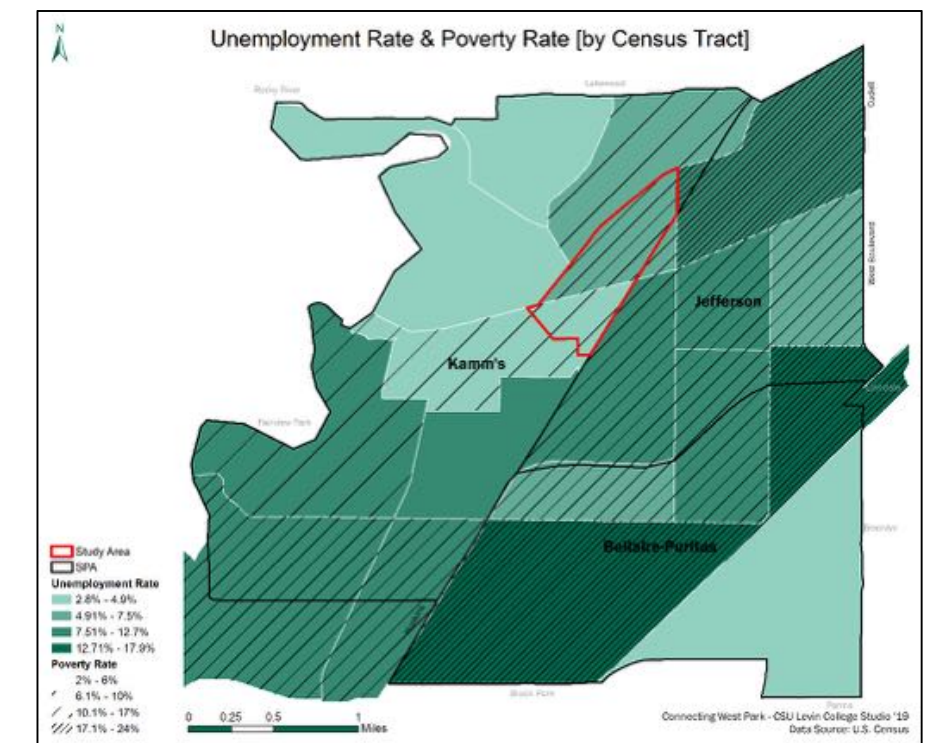


Figure 8. Unemployment and Poverty (Viking Planning Group)

¹⁰ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "B2502: Demographic characteristics for occupied housing units." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

¹¹ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "B06011: Median Income in the past 12 months." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

¹² United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "S2301: Employment Status." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

Racial Demographics and Vehicle Use

Race and Age

The West Park SPA has a large population of nonwhite residents and is more comparable to the census tracts east of the study area. The northern sectors of the study area have a nonwhite population between 27.1 – 40 percent in which 16.1-34 percent of that nonwhite population is foreign born.¹³

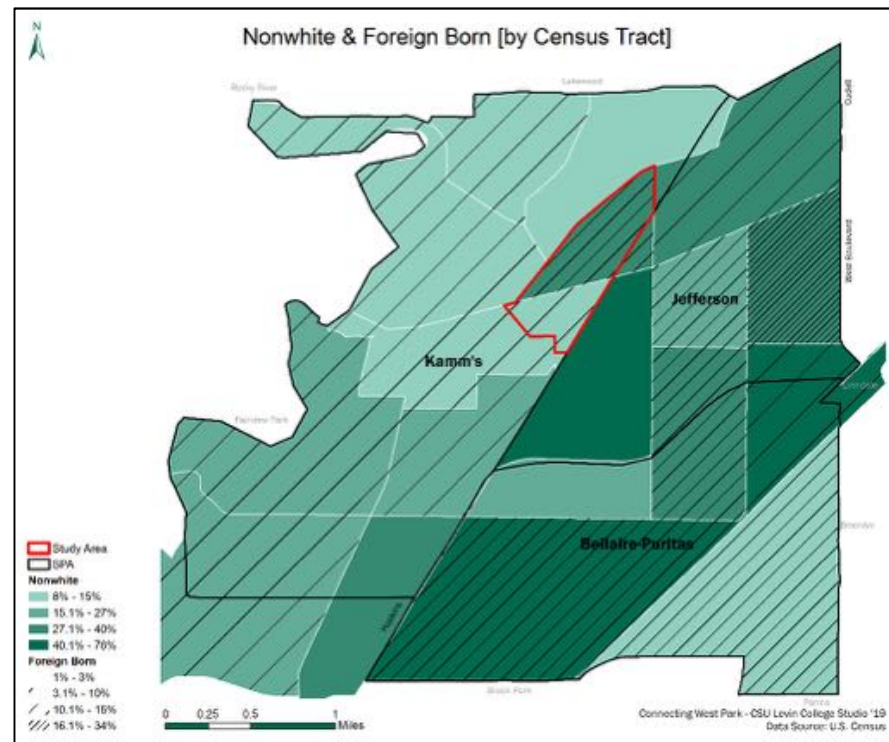


Figure 9. Race (Viking Planning Group)

This same area has the highest number of the senior citizen households in the study area in which 13.21-19.1 percent of households in the northern half of the study area are senior citizen households as compared to only 0-1.6 percent of households in the southern half of the study area. In fact, this

study area holds the highest number of senior citizen housing in all the census tracts studied.¹⁴

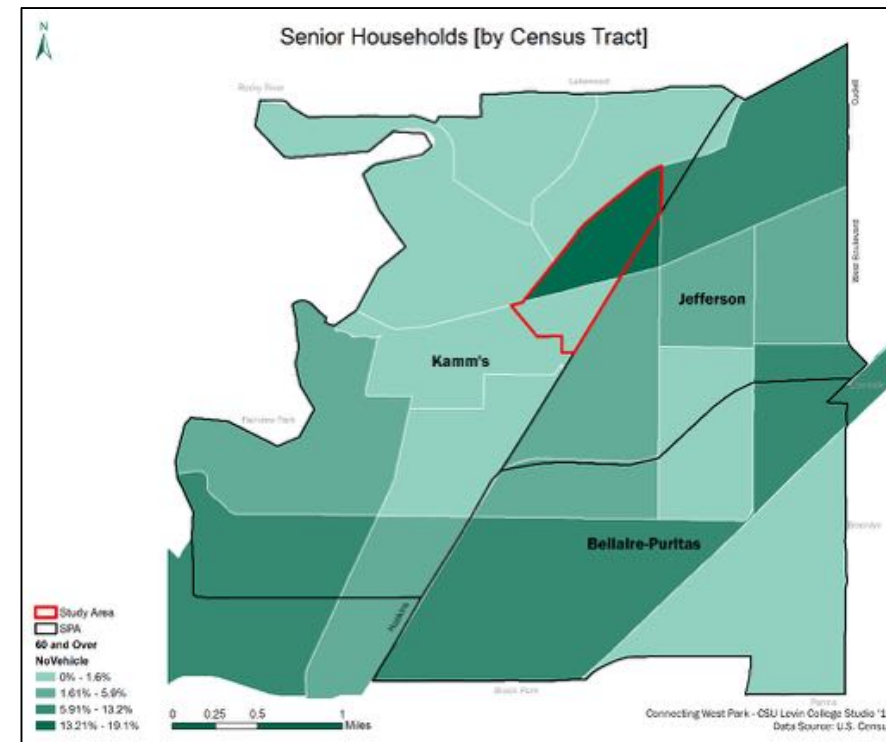


Figure 10. Seniors (Viking Planning Group)

Married Households

When looking at married households and households with children, the stats show that the majority for each are in opposite locations. The northern part of the project focus area has a lower rate of marriage, which is between 9-18 percent, as compared to the southern half of the project area that has a rate between 18.1-27 percent. But the higher rate of households with children under 18 are in the northern half of the study area, which has a rate of 9.1-12 percent, as compared to the southern half of the project area that has a rate between 1.1-4 percent.¹⁵

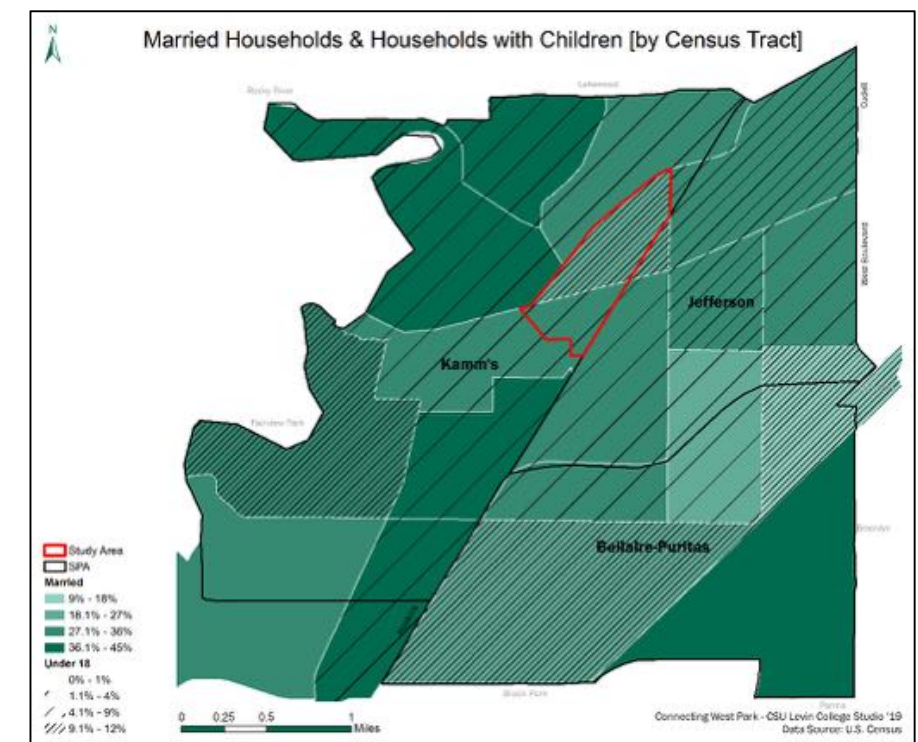


Figure 11. Married Households (Viking Planning Group)

¹³ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "B02001: Race." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

¹⁴ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "S0101: Age and Sex." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

¹⁵ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "S1201: Marital Status." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

Vehicle Usage

Lastly, when looking at vehicle use in the area, the northern half of the project focus area has a higher rate of non-vehicle ownership and public transit use. Between 13.21-19.1 percent of households do not own a car as compared to only 0-1.6 percent of households in the southern half of the study area. The northern half of the project area also has the highest percent of public transit use at 9.1-12 percent as compared to the southern half of the study area at 1.1-4 percent.¹⁶

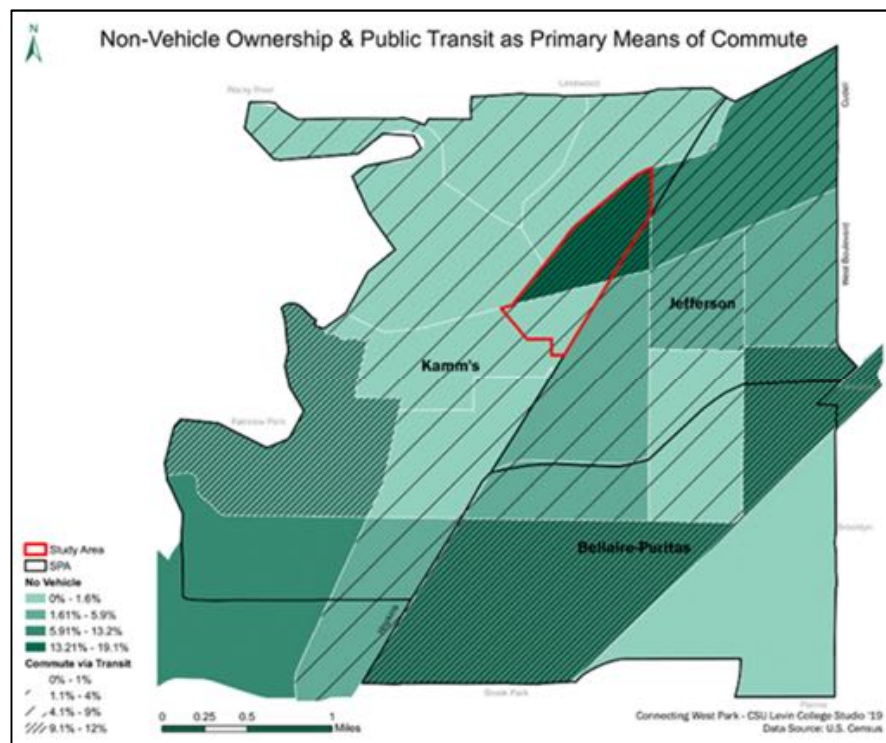


Figure 12. Non-Vehicle Ownership (Viking Planning Group)

Conclusion

The study area is the most diverse section of the West Park neighborhood. The mixture of low to high housing values, homeowners and renters, and young and old citizens allows for diverse developments that give a neighborhood a unique sense of place. This section of West Park also has the highest number of minorities, showing that it is welcoming neighborhood that

is open to creating a more pluralistic society on the west side of Cleveland. Lastly the high percentage of non-vehicle households opens up that ability for transit oriented developments utilizing the RTA redline and bus routes.

Current Land Use and Zoning

Introduction

The study area is in the West Park neighborhood surrounding the W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave. intersection. Much of the study area that lies north of Lorain Avenue is zoned for residential development. The southern half of the study area is zoned mostly for industrial and commercial use. The data gathered shows a clear distinction between the northern and southern half of the study area which may lead to some contentious issues when developing within the area. Below is an outline of all the data gathered to create a framework of the land use and zoning for the study area.

General Zoning Layouts

The West Park project area's eastern border is defined by a rail line that services the RTA Redline and other commercial trains. This has created a strong line of industrial zoning along the project area's eastern edge following the rail line. The industrial zoning is a mix of light and general industry zoning in which the light industrial zoning borders Lorain Avenue, while the general industrial zoning is set back off the main road. Within that industrial zoning are areas of commercial zoning along the two main roads crossing the study area, Lorain Avenue and W. 150th St. This commercial zoning is mainly focused around the intersection of Lorain Ave. and W. 150th St. where the vacant Kmart is located. The commercial zoning is a mix of Local and General Retail in addition to General, Office and Special Commercial zoning designations. The western boundary of the study area follows Triskett Rd. This half of the study area is

mainly residential. Most of the area is zoned for two-family housing, but there is a small area zoned for apartments on the northern edges of the study area. Figure 13 shows general zoning for the study area and surrounding neighborhoods.



Figure 13. General Zoning (Viking Planning Group)

Special Zoning Distinctions

There are several of special zoning designations that will need attention in the study area. In the area north of Lorain Avenue, commercial development can be developed inside of an industrial zoning location. This same allowance is allowed south of Lorain Avenue directly behind the abandoned Kmart.

Much of Lorain Ave. is zoned as local retail business. This zoning was implemented after KCDC received a master plan which recommended more neighborhood-oriented retail along Lorain Ave. The hopes were to create a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape and to try to limit future chain establishments from relocating at this site. The only uses that can move in are retail or commercial establishments that mainly focus on the local community. For example, the parcels

¹⁶ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "S0802: Means of Transportation to work by selected characteristics." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

located on W. 147th St. and the north side of Lorain Ave. were previously zoned both general retail and two-family residential. This zoning split made it difficult for redevelopment, so those parcels were all rezoned as local as local retail.



Figure 14. Special Zoning (Viking Planning Group)

Zoning Design

The project area has been designed to create a live-work community. Most of the residential zoning use in the area has been designated to allow two-family housing developments. By bordering an industrial and commercial corridor, these two-family developments allow for easy worker commutes for lower income individuals.



Figure 15. Zoning Design (Viking Planning Group)

Land Use

The land use design for this area follows the zoning designation to a large extent, but there are several areas that should be pointed out. It can be seen on the southern half of Lorain Ave that the industrial zoning is broken into light industry, general industry, and residential land use. While the residential land use could not be used today, but the light industry land does foster ideas of what industries would be willing to locate to this area. Additionally, behind the Kmart site, the zoning is for general retail, but the land use is currently labeled as industrial use. This could create nuisance issues between any new retail that is placed on the Kmart site.

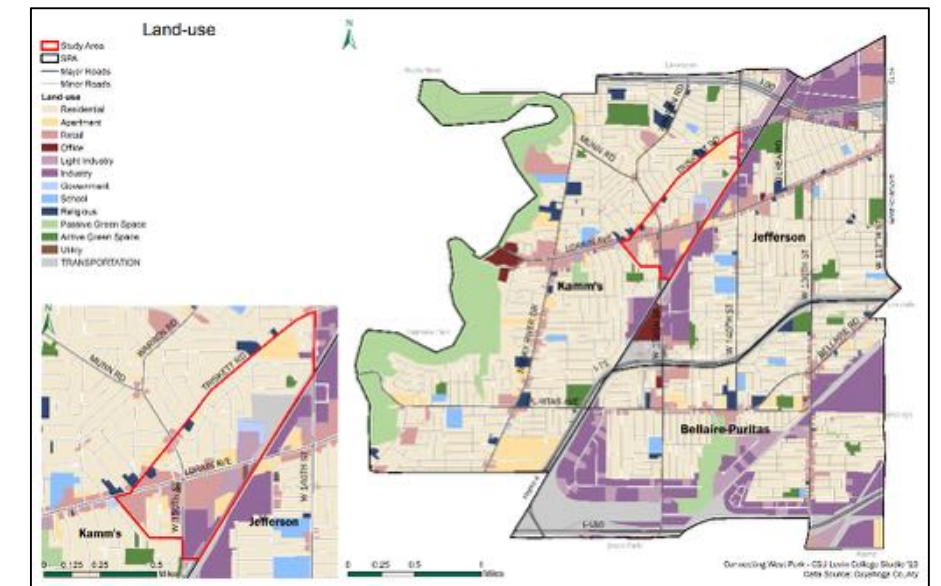


Figure 16. Land Use (Viking Planning Group)

Conclusion

The project area comes equipped with a functional zoning scheme. The mix of two-family housing and industrial use creates an environment in which lower income individuals would be able to find employment opportunities close to home. The industrial use behind the Kmart site may need to be rezoned to bring in new retail development if inventive separation between the two sites cannot be realized.

Environmental Conditions

Maps from Ohio EPA indicate that in West Park there is no air quality monitoring, no biosolids application sites, no drinking water advisory, no composting facility, no solid waste facilities, no scrap tire recycling resources, and no publicly known brownfields.¹⁷ There were no environmental spills in West Park, but there was a fuel diesel spill north east of the train tracks.¹⁸ There is stream drainage from Rocky River to Lake Erie.¹⁹ Most of West Park is ineligible for permits for activity that will result in dredge fill. However, most of the study area is eligible for these permits.

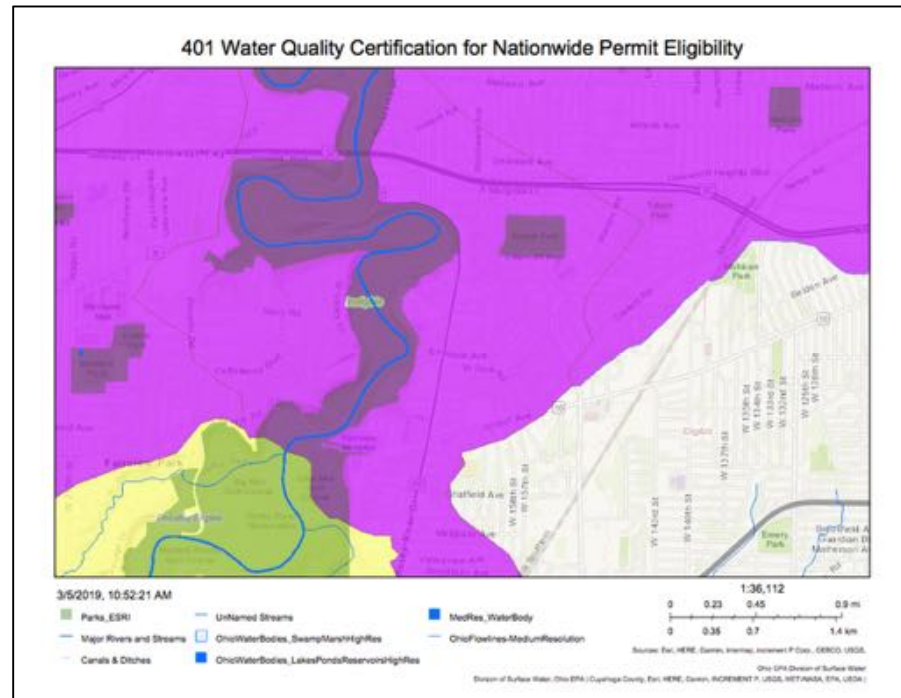


Figure 17. Water Quality Permit Eligibility

Water Quality

The Ohio EPA and the Ohio Department of Natural have endorsed the Rocky River Watershed Action Plan (RRWAP)

and efforts are currently underway to create a new Watershed Master Plan. The RRWAP establishes the framework for protecting and restoring the Rocky River and its tributaries, including sources of impairment and proposed solutions. In October 2018, the NEORS D held a board meeting where Frank Greenland, Director of Watershed Programs, highlighted the need for intervention and solutions in areas within the Rocky River Watershed because there has been an increase in sediment loading which can trigger issues regarding flooding and erosion. Mr. Greenland stated that there is a need for solutions that will help mitigate this issue

Storm water pollution can be directly attributed to excessive amounts of impervious surfaces within an area. The current amount of impervious surface within the study area averages 683.92 in stormwater fees, compared to an overall City of Cleveland regular average of \$88.40.²⁰ This presents an opportunity to create effective and innovative ways to reduce the number of impervious surfaces within the site. An impervious surface can be defined as paved roads, parking lots, roofs, and even highly compacted soils like sports fields. Impervious surfaces prevent the natural soaking of rainwater into the ground forcing the water to slowly filter into the surrounding streams. These hard surfaces cause water to accumulate over time, which then flows rapidly into storm drains. This results in severe harm to Water Quantity, Quality, temperature and overall livability.



Figure 18. Map of Watersheds in Northeast Ohio

Cleveland's Tree Plan

Tree canopies provide many benefits to communities such as: improving water quality, reducing erosion, reducing stormwater runoff, saving energy, lowering city temperatures, reducing air pollution, enhancing property values, providing wildlife habitats, facilitating social and educational opportunities, and providing aesthetic benefits.

The Cleveland Tree Plan is a community-wide collaboration established in 2015 to rebuild the urban forest through the partnership of five organizations to initiate and fund the project. The team consists of the City of Cleveland, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Holden Arboretum, LAND Studio, and Western Reserve Land Conservancy. Based on the urban tree canopy data calculations, Cleveland is losing an estimated 97 acres of tree canopy per year, which is just over 6,400 trees.²¹ Continuing at this rate, the city's urban tree cover will drop

¹⁷ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

¹⁸ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

¹⁹ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

²⁰ (Ohio EPA, 2006)

²¹ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

from 19% to only 14% by 2040.²² Although the neighborhood of Kamm’s Corners (including the study area, as shown in Figure 19) has the highest percentage of the canopy in the city of Cleveland at 30%, the eastern edge of Kamm’s corner site is currently facing a major lack of urban canopy that needs to be addressed and solved. A huge issue that our site has to address is the urban heat island effects and climate change, which is causing extreme weather and public health problems and negatively affecting water quality.

According to the EPA, the term “heat island” describes built environment areas that are hotter than nearby rural areas.²³ This means “the annual average air temperature of a city with 1 million people or more can be 1.8–5.4°F warmer than its surroundings, and in the evening, the difference can be as high as 22°F”.²⁴ Heat islands directly affect community energy demand, air pollution, water conditions, and mortality. Fortunately, Tree Canopies can be used to help mitigate this issue by providing shade and ambient temperature cooling effects to reduce community vulnerability to climate change.



Figure 19. Tree canopy cover by neighborhood (City of Cleveland, 2015)

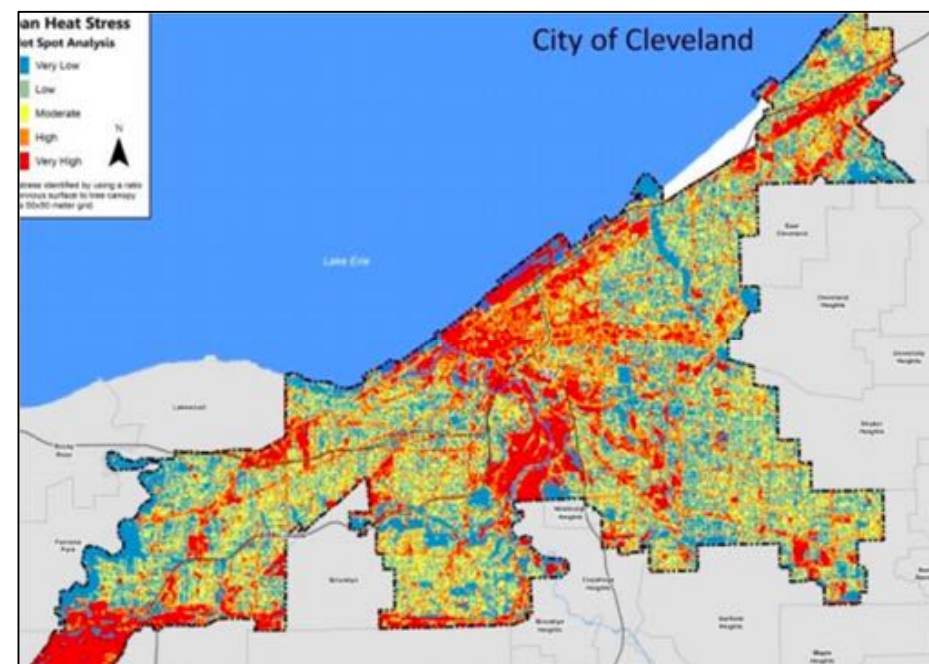


Figure 20. Urban heat stress by hot spot analysis (City of Cleveland, 2015)

Stormwater Runoff and Carbon Benefits

NEORS D recognizes that Green Infrastructure plays a significant role in stormwater management. NEORS D has been responsible for building and maintaining Green Infrastructure projects that promote smart stormwater solutions as well as implementing a policy to pursue opportunities through their service area Capital Improvement & Operation and Maintenance Program: NEORS D implements combined sewer overflow-control, Green Infrastructure projects, and invest in projects that enhance sewer capacity. Green infrastructure is Implemented through 6 strategies which include the following

- Green Infrastructure Grants Program which is partnering with communities to remove or detain stormwater from separate- or combined-sewer systems. The program is open to member communities, governmental entities, non-profits, or business working in partnership with their community in the interest of implementing water resource projects that remove stormwater from the combined sewer and long-term maintenance of their decided practice.²⁵

²² (Davey Resource Group, 2015)

²³ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

²⁴ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

²⁵ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

- Member Community Infrastructure Program which assesses and fund local sewer improvements that resolve water quality and quantity issues.²⁶
- Water Resources Restoration Sponsorship Program which works with partners to sponsor projects that protect and improve water quality through preservation and restoration of ecosystems.²⁷
- Community Discharge Permit Program (Title III & IV) uses Green Infrastructure to reduce stress on sewer infrastructure and support permit compliance, by reviewing plans and encouraging runoff reduction or stormwater offloading.²⁸
- Regional Stormwater Management Program (Title V) which manages the regional stormwater system to implement and maintain Green Infrastructure and address flooding, erosion, and water quality concerns, including an incentive of stormwater fee credits.²⁹

There is currently a Green Infrastructure Grant Program awarded project located in Kamm’s Corners at 16906 Albers Avenue. This project consists of a Green Public Parking Lot Retrofit which was awarded \$249,583.³⁰

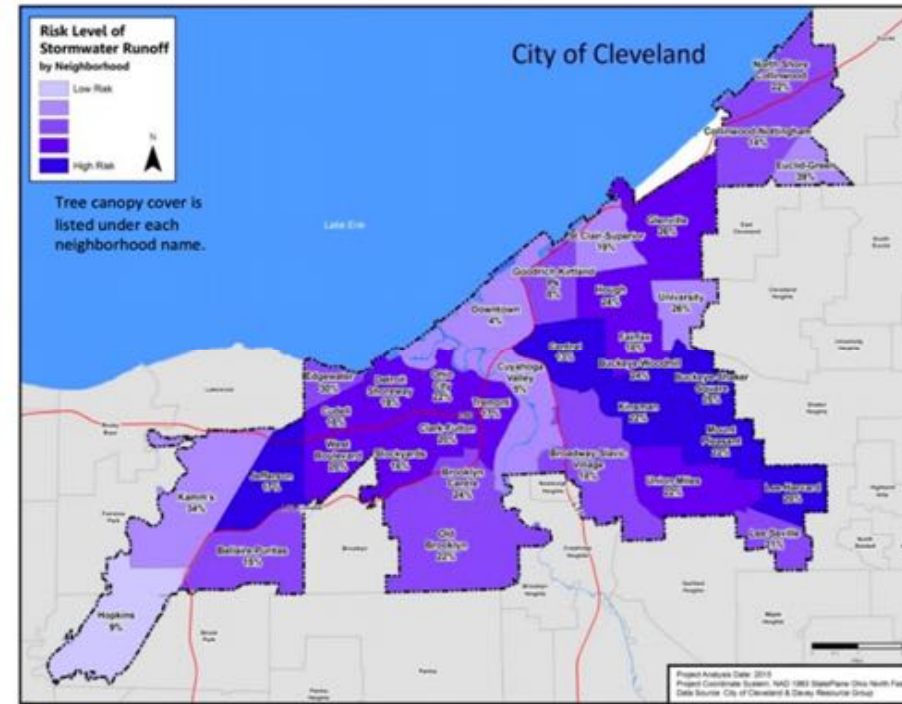


Figure 21. Risk Level of Stormwater Runoff by Neighborhood
(City of Cleveland, 2015)

Bioswales

Bioswales are a landscapes element designed to filter and concentrate all debris and pollution out of surface runoff. A swale is a low, hollow channel, slightly sloped on the sides. A bioswale is filled with vegetation and compost and is designed to maximize the time water spends in the swale. The longer water stays in the bioswale, the more dirt and pollutants will be removed. Bioswales are beneficial and effective groundwater recharge and stormwater mitigation tools, by protecting surface water and local waterways from excessive pollution from storm water. Bioswales also attract animals and create

habitats for certain animals. Lastly, bioswales are aesthetically pleasing when they are properly maintained.³¹

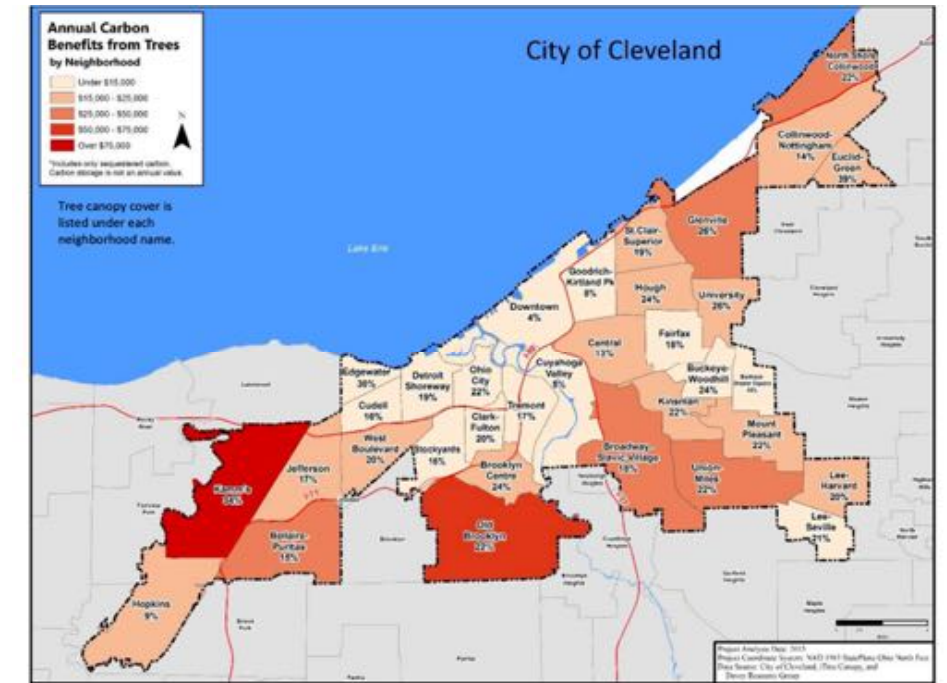


Figure 22. Annual Carbon Benefits for Trees
(City of Cleveland, 2015)

If a community, resident, or business owner is thinking about implementing bioswales on their property, it is important to consider many factors. Bioswales can be affected by different variables including; climate, rainfall, topography, the size of the site it is on, budget, how well it is maintained, and vegetation. It is critically important to maintain bioswales regularly to ensure that the removal of pollutants is effective and efficient. The planning process of implementing a bioswale is important and someone should consider; filters and/or rocks to prevent

²⁶ (Ohio EPA, 2019)
²⁷ (Ohio EPA, 2006)
²⁸ (Ohio EPA, 2017)
²⁹ (Ohio EPA, 2019)
³⁰ (Ohio EPA, 2019)
³¹ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

clogging, annual maintenance, soil tests, inspection, and mechanical testing.³²

Common places where bioswales are built are parking lots. Automobile pollution settles into the pavement and it is eventually flushed out by rain. Bioswales can be created around the edges of parking lots to treat and capture storm water runoff before it is released into the watershed or sewer. Bioswales can also be integrated into road mediums, sidewalk, curbs, and any public space.³³

There are currently no bioswales in West Park. Implementing bioswales throughout the neighborhood would be environmentally beneficial, and provide more character to the neighborhood.

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³² (Ohio EPA, 2019)

³³ (Ohio EPA, 2019)

Transportation and Mobility

Study Area Context

The transportation context of the study area is relatively unique. The area is well-connected to the regional transportation network via two interstate highways within about a 5-minute drive, as well as access to Greater Cleveland's heavy rail route, the Red Line. Transit connections are a vital asset that connects the neighborhood to the two largest employment hubs in Northeast Ohio, Downtown Cleveland and University Circle, via a 30 and 45 minute commute time, respectively.

The land use and sparse retail and food landscape within the study area makes walking less effective time-wise. In the immediate vicinity, grocery stores are somewhat accessible by foot, though not quite within a 1/2-mile walk. Additionally, the pedestrian experience of reaching resources like grocery stores may be dangerous, uncomfortable, and/or uninteresting due to the lack of pedestrian scale amenities along Lorain Ave.

Figure 24 shows travel times to major destinations from around the center of our study area.

	Hopkins Airport	Ohio City	Public Square	I-71/I-90	Grocery Store
Drive	7 min.	13 min.	18 min.	5-7 min.	5 min.
Transit	18 min.	28 min.	30 min.	-	8-10 min.
Bicycle	30 min.	25-30 min.	36 min.	-	5 min.
Walk	2 hours	1 hr. 45 min.	2 hr. 14 min.	-	13 min.

Figure 24. Travel Times to Major Destinations
(Viking Planning Group)

Figure 23 shows the circulation patterns for multiple transportation modes. The green bike paths indicate where the road is marked with dedicated bike lanes. Note that the dedicated bike lane on Lorain Ave vanishes as it passes under the rail tracks, where it is dark and seemingly most needed. The

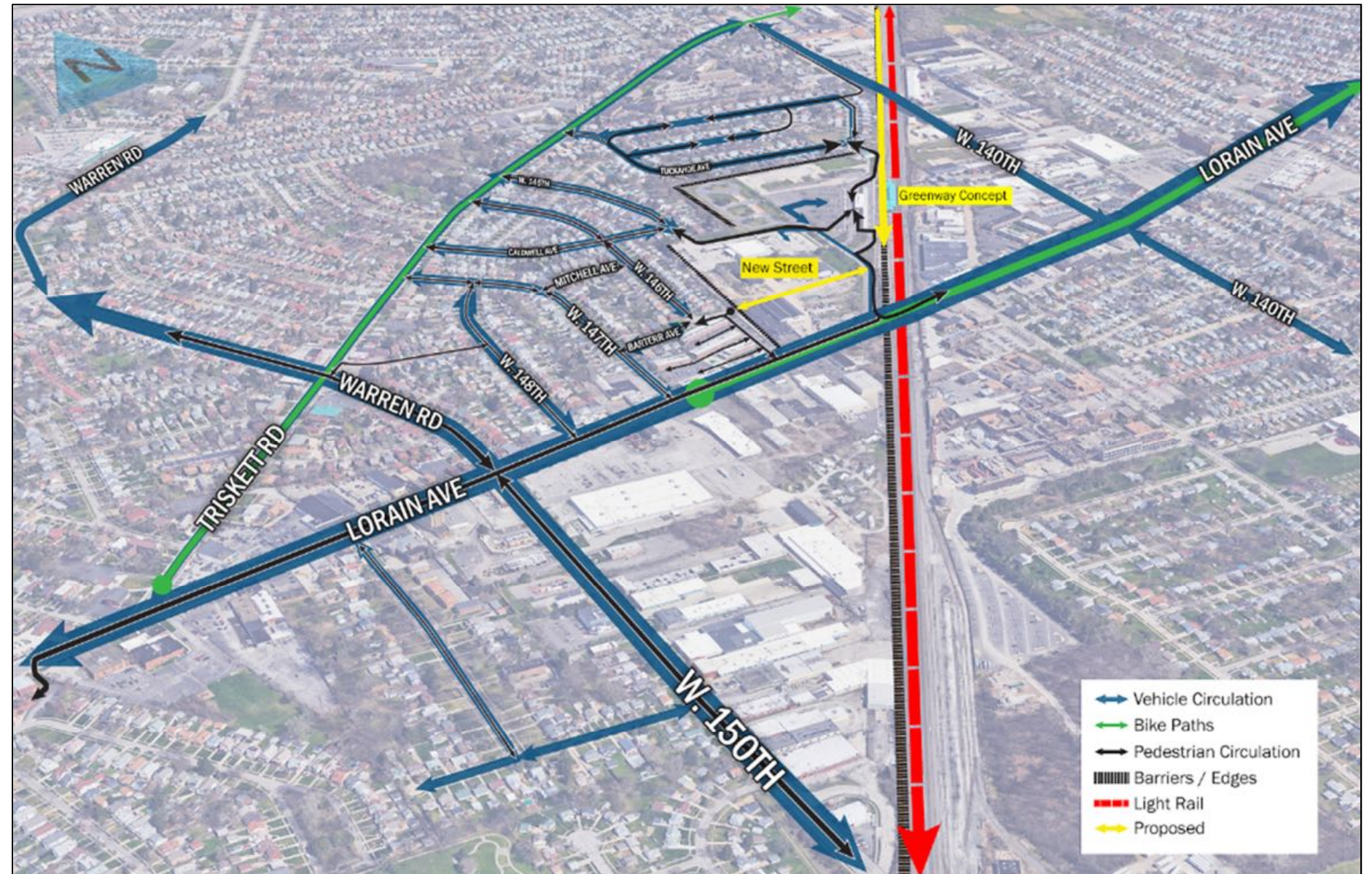


Figure 23. Circulation Diagram (Viking Planning Group)

rail serves as a hard barrier for our study area. It complicates travel from northwest to southeast, requiring a detour up to W. 140th St before heading south.

Commuting Characteristics

One of the main generators of travel is home to work, i.e. commuting. Commuting characteristics of the study area can be understood using the Census LEHD (Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics) LODES (LEHD Origin

Destination Employment Statistics). This dataset shows the workplaces of residents in a given area, and the homes of workers who work in that same given study area.

Figure 27 shows the inflow/outflow characteristics of the study area. In 2002, about the same number of people left the neighborhood to work as those entering it to work. Over time

this has shifted towards less daytime employment in the study area. Very few have ever lived and worked in the study area in the last two decades.

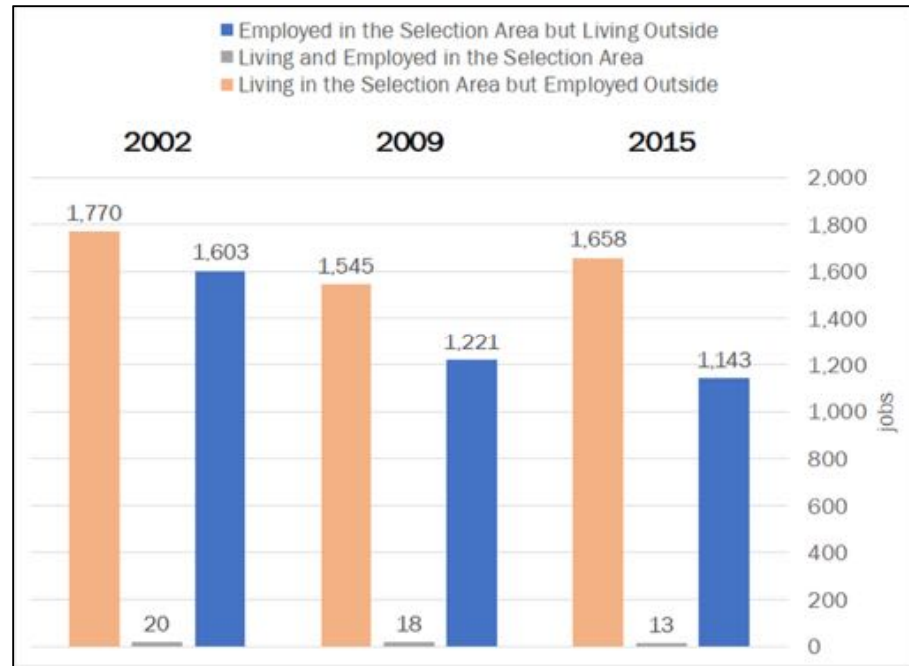


Figure 27. Inflow-Outflow Study (Viking Planning Group)

Looking further into destination data, residents of the study area are often travelling northeast towards their workplaces Downtown, University Circle, and other hubs.

There are substantially fewer residents who seem to work in the vicinity on the west side. And only 13 who worked in the study area and lived in it. The spatial travel pattern for people who work in the study area but live outside is markedly different. They are generally contained on the west side and don't live very far away; many live along Lorain Ave in Cleveland, in Lakewood to the north, Cudell, Old Brooklyn, and Parma. There are very few coming to the study area from the east side of Cleveland.³⁴

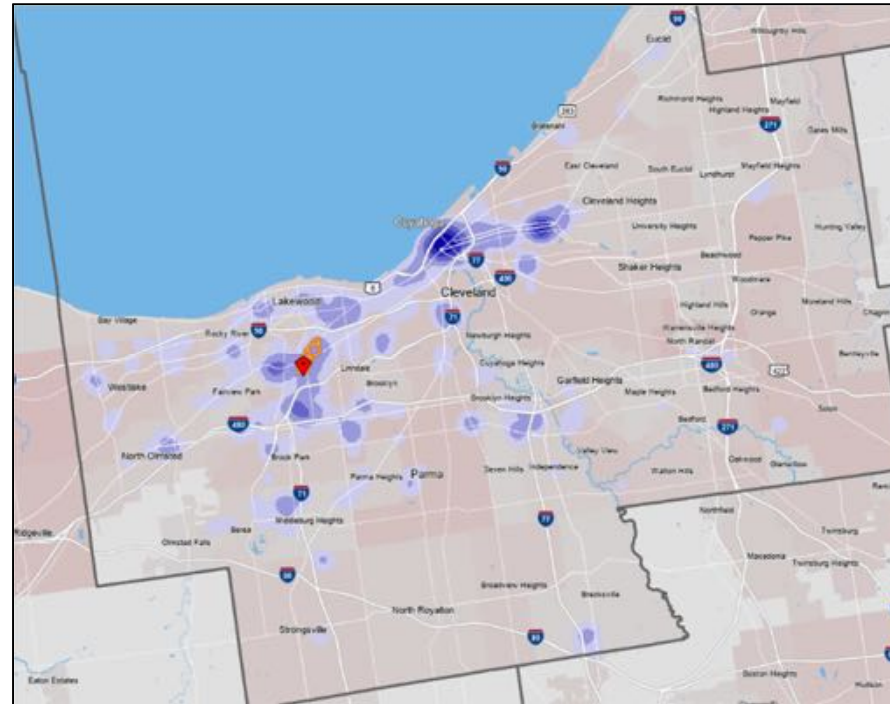


Figure 25. Residents; Places of Work (LEHD)

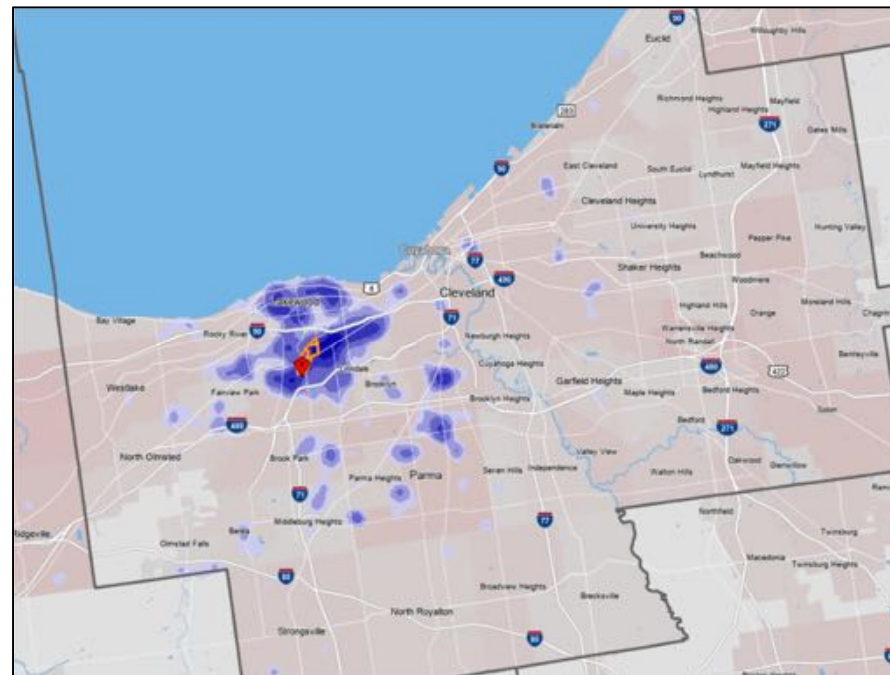


Figure 26. Where Workers in Study Area Live, 2015 (LEHD)

Transportation Equity

Finally, but not least importantly, we have a significant opportunity to address and mitigate transportation equity concerns in our plan. As shown in darker shades of pink below, our study area has high rates of zero car households per sq. mile as well as people in poverty per sq. mile.



Figure 28. Poverty and Zero-Vehicle Households (Viking Planning Group)

³⁴ American Community Survey data indicate that the northern portion of our site, which is essentially Census Tract 1235.02, has lower than city and county rates of automobile commuting to work. It's not clear exactly what is causing this, but there is also an unusually high number of those who use taxicab, motorcycle or other means, which, in any case, reflects those who need alternate means to get to work than cars.

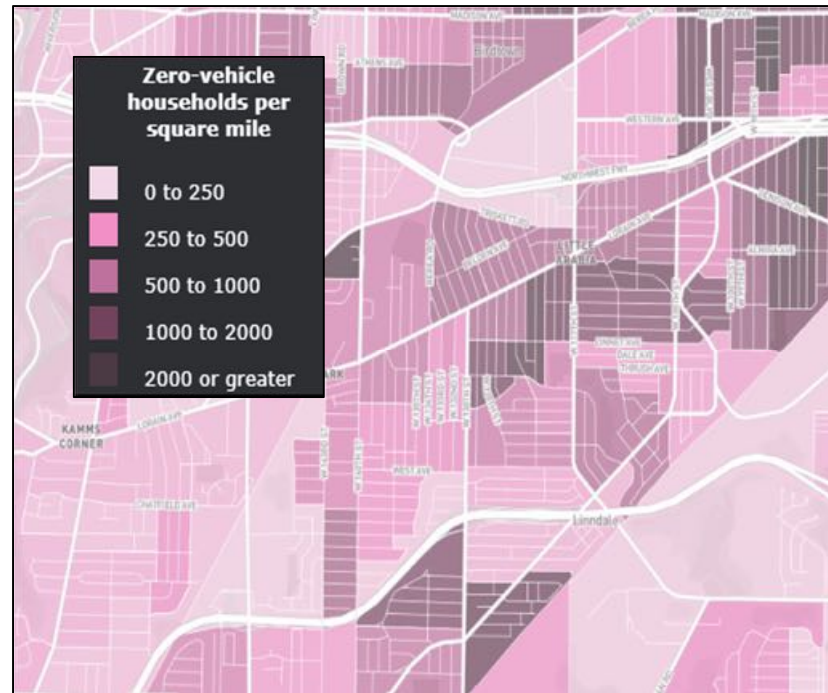


Figure 29. Zero-Vehicle Households (Viking Planning Group)

Existing Infrastructure

Transit Network

As a result of the same demand for non-car travel, transit use is also significant. The West Park Station RTA rapid station is much more than a train station: it serves as a multi-modal transit hub to transfer further along the far west side of the county to routes that go downtown. Our study area's northern half has higher transit use (11%) than the whole city (10%), and than the county by far (5%).

The transit network is outlined above to highlight frequent peak hour routes. The threshold of 15 minutes is generally considering the minimum amount of headway between trips to liberate people to efficiently show up and travel, instead of plan all trips in advance according to the schedule. Route 22 to Ohio City and Downtown are significant and meet that criteria, as well as the Red Line.

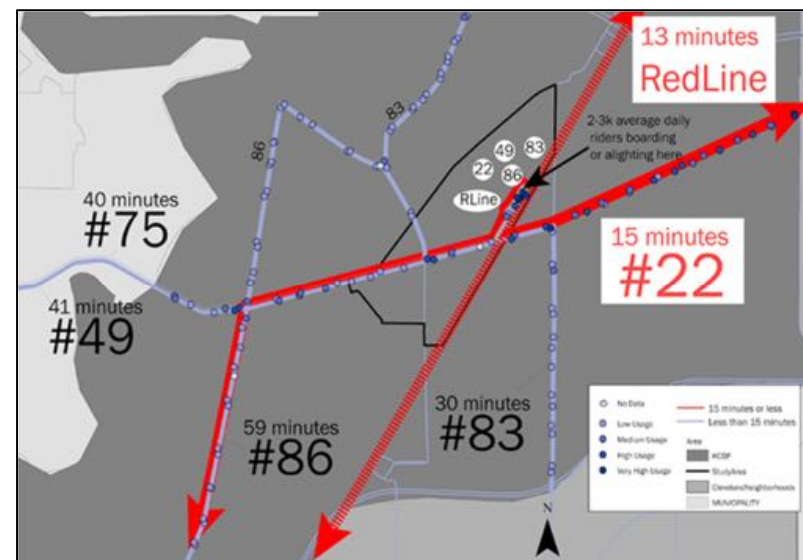


Figure 30. High Frequency Routes and Transit Context (Viking Planning Group)

Altogether, the 6 routes that meet at the West Park transit hub see about 2 thousand daily riders boarding. This is considerably more than Shaker Square, Little Italy, W 25th and Lorain and Cudell each generate and is a major takeaway from our Phase 1 research. West Park Station is a major transit hub and, while it doesn't have flashy private development or major destinations next to it, it is an important node in GCRTA's network and transit work horse for the west side that needs to be acknowledged by the planning process. Not considering it's position as one of the biggest transfer hubs would be an oversight and lost opportunity.

West Park Station Parking

Parking capacity at the West Park station is considerable: 320 striped spaces, including 10 handicapped spaces, with additional overflow (unstriped) parking available on the north side of the station area. About 35% of the striped spaces are used on an average weekday, with parking usage studies from 2016 and 2019 showing virtually the same numbers. Anecdotal evidence from RTA staff indicates that the parking lot is filled to capacity about 20 times per year, particularly on weekends when sports, concerts and other cultural events are happening downtown. The West Park station's parking usage is

considerably lower than at the two adjacent stations: Puritas Station to the south (near I-71) sees weekday usage of 51% and Triskett Station to the north (near I-90) sees weekday usage of 45%. Needless to say, with the exception of the high demand days, each of these stations, though particularly West Park, have considerable underutilized parking areas.

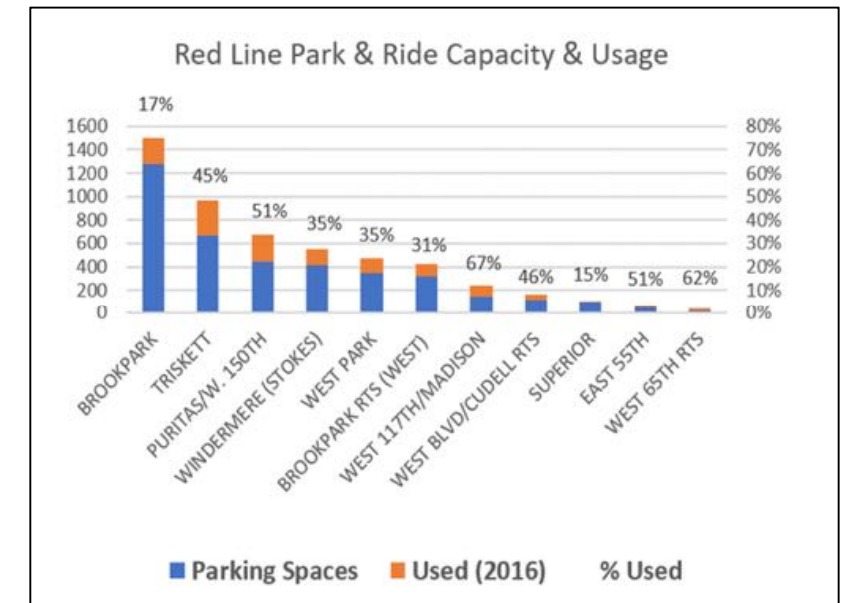


Figure 31. Red Line Parking Capacity & Usage; (RTA, 2019)

Road Network

Road network capacity is similarly below capacity throughout the study area: with the exception of W. 150th St., which sees over 28,000 cars/day (ADT), the arterial streets in the study area see busy, but not overwhelming, amounts of traffic. Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS) data from 2019 shows that Lorain Ave.'s traffic volume/capacity ratio is only .43. That is, as a 4-lane roadway with just over 13,000 cars/day, there is ample "space" to either accommodate more cars or perhaps consider a different lane configuration, such as a road diet and/or addition of bike lanes.

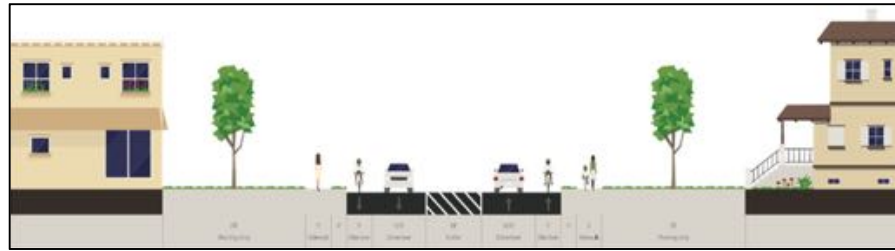


Figure 32. Street-Mix Elevation: Triskett Rd
(Viking Planning Group)

Street rights-of-way (ROWs), i.e. curb-to-curb road widths, in the study area range from 42' (Triskett and Warren Rds.) to 54' (Lorain Ave.); W. 140th and W. 150th are both 52' wide. With the exception of Triskett Road, which appears to have undergone a road diet from 4-lanes to 3-lanes with bike lanes in recent years (see Fig. 5 above), the road network is largely dedicated to higher speed automobile traffic, despite speed limits of 25mph. That is, road widths and broad building-to-building ROWs, particularly those streets with few street trees, encourage higher speed (40-45mph, based on observations) travel throughout the study area. Neighborhood streets in the residential sections of the study area are appropriately-scaled, some of them brick-lined, and speeding traffic does not seem to be a major issue.

Crash data points to the challenges with speeding traffic on streets that generally have a lot of curb cuts and thus, turning movements. The TIMS map of crashes from 2015 to 2017 (Figure 33) shows a neighborhood littered with crashes, many of them severe, and two of them fatal (on W. 140th St.). The high speeds and number of crashes point to the need for traffic-calming and other pedestrian-friendly measures to be implemented throughout the area.

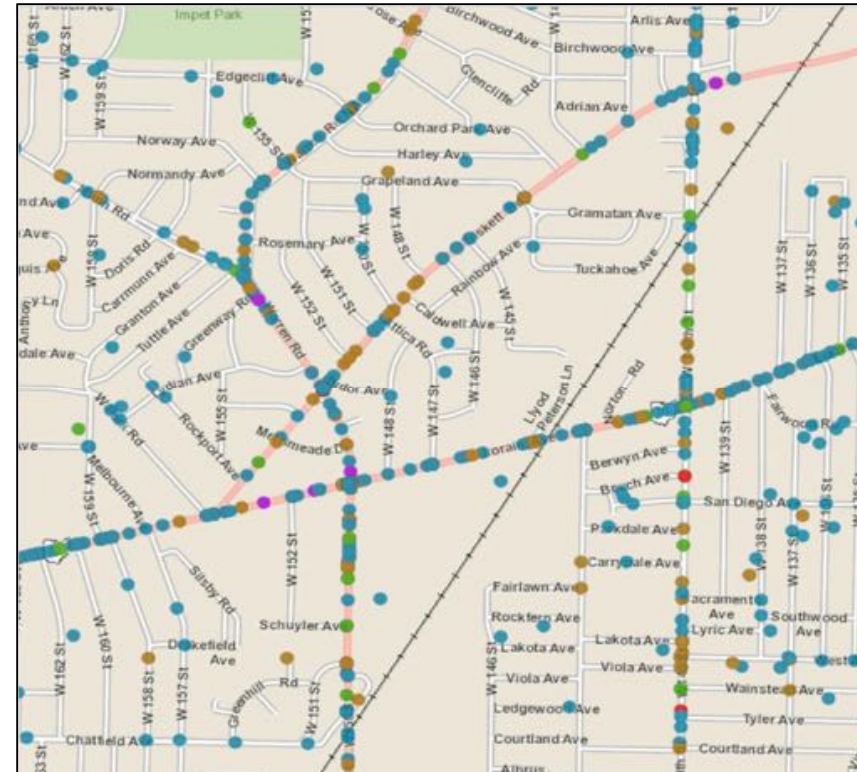


Figure 33. ODOT TIMS Crash Data (ODOT 2019)

Pedestrian Network

The sidewalk network in the study is essentially complete in that there are no streets without sidewalks. 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile walksheds for both the RTA station and the Kmart site (Fig. 7, below) illustrate greater than 1/2-mile distances to supermarkets, a bit far for a shopper on foot (while Marc's is within the 1/2-mile walkshed of the RTA station as the crow flies, true walking distance under the tracks along Lorain Ave. would be great than 1/2-mile).

While the neighborhood is broadly "walkable" it is nonetheless auto-dominated. Major shortcomings of the pedestrian environment include: 1) the scarcity and dispersed nature of walkable destinations within the study area (e.g. of major destinations, only the library and YMCA, and perhaps the post office and RTA station, are in close proximity to one another); 2) the dearth of streets trees or other greenery along most of the arterials (Warren Rd and parts of Triskett Rd being the

exceptions); 3) physical barriers such as snow piles, dimly lit underpasses; and 4) extra-wide crossing distances at major intersections, which can be particularly challenging for slower pedestrians such as seniors, handicapped individuals, parents with young kids walking or in strollers, etc.

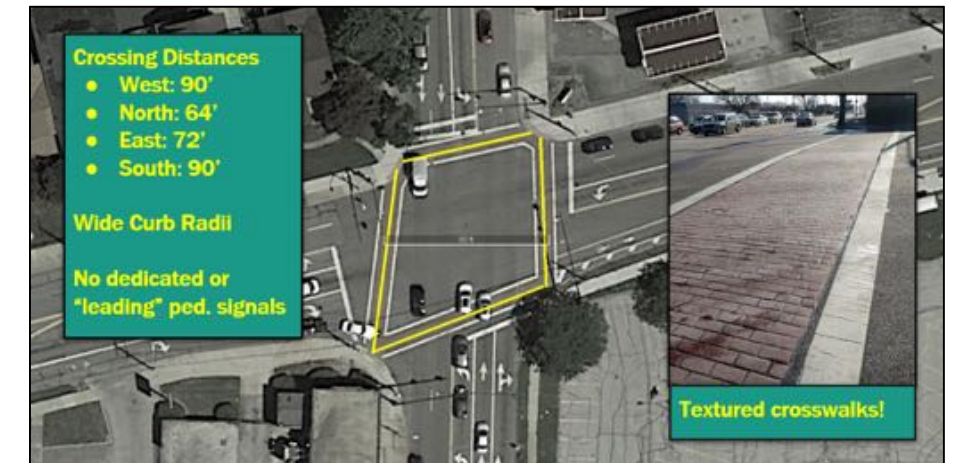


Figure 34. W. 150th St. & Lorain Ave. Crossing Distances;
(Google Earth, 2019)

This last point is perfectly illustrated at W. 150th and Lorain Ave., which suffers from added turn lanes and wide curb radii, likely installed to facilitate "traffic flow", but resulting in higher speed turning movements. While the intersection received newly textured crosswalks in the past few years, this is sadly a "lipstick-on-a-pig" measure that does little to improve pedestrian safety or comfort.



Figure 35. 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile walksheds for RTA Station and Kmart site, (Google Earth, 2019)

Additional recent investments in the pedestrian network include new sidewalks along Lorain Ave, along with a handful of new street trees in a narrow tree belt, plus a reconfigured Triskett Rd/Lorain Ave. intersection, with Triskett now softly T-ing into Lorain rather than functioning as a merge. While these are no doubt welcome improvements, they seem to have not gone quite far enough to improve pedestrian safety and rebalance the transportation network ever-so-slightly away from the automobile.

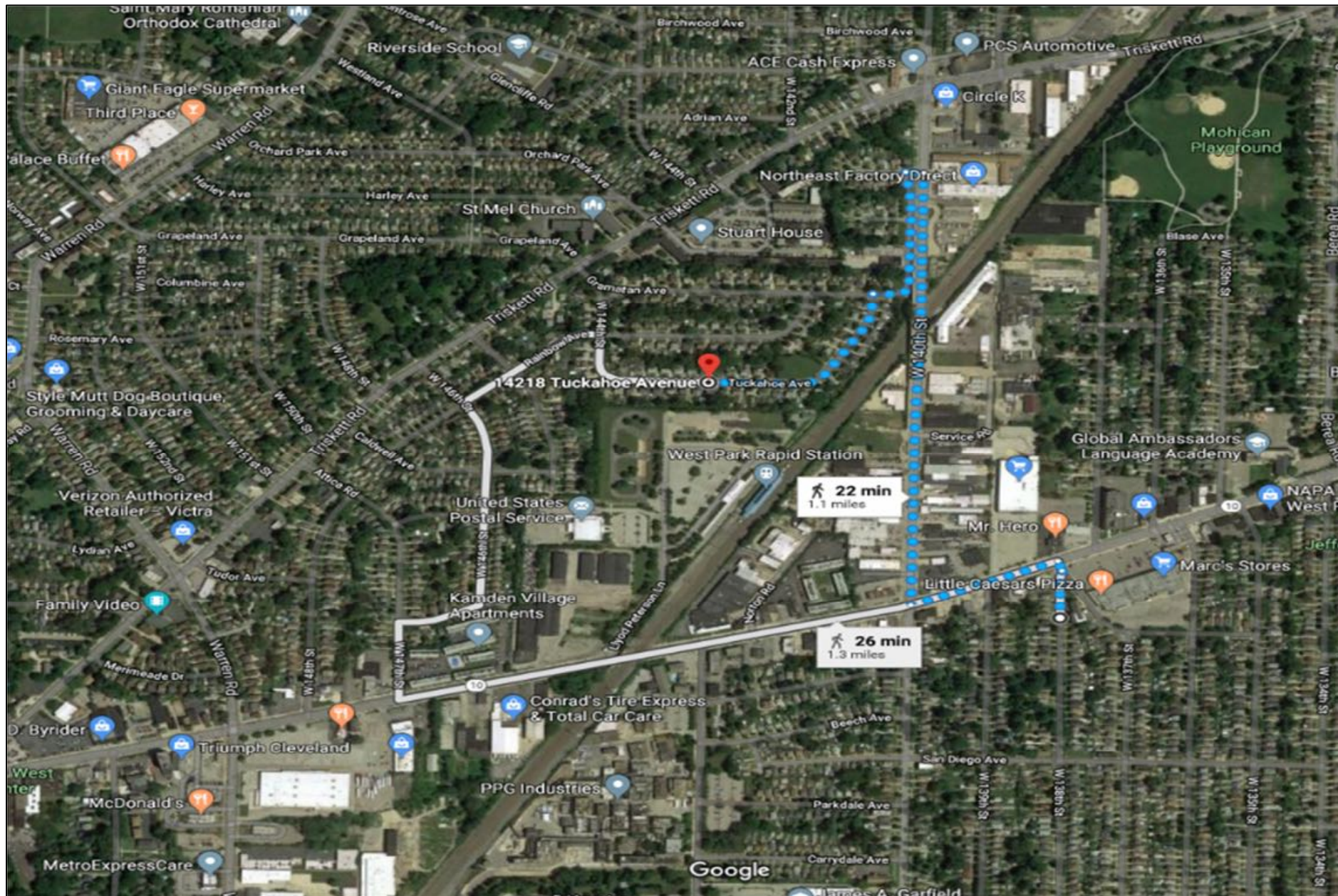


Figure 36. Alternative pedestrian access to RTA station from Gramatan; Source: Google Maps

One final challenge for pedestrians is safe and easy access to the West Park RTA station. Aside from the ¼-mile uphill walk from Lorain Ave to the station, there are two pedestrian entrances from the Gramatan neighborhood, one from the north and one from the west. There is no direct access from the east across the tracks; rather pedestrians must cross the tracks on Lorain Ave. via a dimly-lit underpass. While the west-side access point feels relatively safe and open, the north-end entrance is an extremely narrow (3' in places) walkway hemmed in by a 6'-high chain link fence. Despite the gauntlet-like nature of this path, about 100 transit riders use it to access the station on an average weekday, based on anecdotal evidence from on-site RTA staff. Lacking or avoiding this pathway, the alternative, as shown below, would be a considerably longer walk to the station.

Bicycle Network

The study area's bicycle infrastructure consists of bike lanes on Triskett Rd. along its full length and lane markings on portions of Lorain Ave. from the railroad tracks west to W. 150th. The Triskett Rd. bike lanes, as shown in the street elevation in Fig. 6, consist of 5'-wide, curbside lanes on either side of the street; they are unprotected from traffic yet have no adjacent parked cars to contend with. It is unclear how widely used these lanes are (we did not observe any users during our three days on site in February), but they likely serve somewhat of a traffic-calming function. It will be good to see whether crashes diminish since the lanes were installed. Unfortunately, the lanes on both sides fall just short of Triskett's intersection with Lorain Ave, stopping and starting based on where cars seem to need additional space. Whether such a configuration inhibits their use warrants further study.

The Lorain Ave. bike lanes, on the other hand, are "buffered" in spots, that is, they are accompanied by wide, diagonally-striped areas which ostensibly separate bike traffic from

automobile traffic. As in other locations in Cleveland, however – most famously W. 25th St. in Ohio City – the striped buffers have been painted between the sidewalk and the bike lane, rather than between the vehicle travel lanes and the bike lane. This odd configuration might make some sense if there were rows of parallel-parked cars whose swinging driver-side doors bicyclists might need protection from, but there is no curb-side parking along this stretch of Lorain, parallel or otherwise. The only exception to this practice of “reverse-buffering” is through the underpass crossing below the railroad tracks; here bicyclists are adequately protected from traffic by the wide-striped buffer, as they are more typically intended to do.

Once again, however, the lanes disappear as they approach a major intersection – in this case Lorain and W. 150th St. – seemingly determined by the need for additional space for cars. The west-bound lane stops inexplicably at W. 147th St., blocks ahead of the intersection, whereas the east-bound lane extends a bit farther.



Figure 37. Reverse-buffered Bike Lane, Lorain Ave

What is particularly striking about the section west of W. 150th St. is why the Lorain Ave. bike lanes stop at all. They begin at W. 117th St. on an area of Lorain Ave. that sees no less daily traffic than this section of West Park, so why they do not

extend further west all the way to Kamm’s Corners and beyond remains unknown to us for the moment. The opportunity and road capacity, as noted above, is clearly there. Fortunately, the County Greenways Plan (Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, 2018) and other recent plans have positively

identified this western portion of Lorain Ave. as a potential regional bike-way, so the first step of recognition is there.

While there is currently no off-street bicycle infrastructure within the study area, an opportunity may exist via an unused railroad right-of-way wedged between the Red Line tracks and



Figure 38: Potential Future Greenway adjacent to RTA tracks

the station area. This ROW extends uninterrupted on the northwest side of the tracks 3.4 miles from Puritas Station all the way to W. 112th and Madison Ave. in Lakewood, potentially connecting both four RTA stations and numerous public parks and neighborhoods with a fully separated and protected-from-traffic “bicycle highway” from car traffic. Once again, the County Greenway Plan identifies this as a potential off-street route, particularly in helping to better connect transit-dependent area with lower-than-average car ownership rates.

Lastly, it should be noted that RTA buses are all equipped with front-loading bike racks that can accommodate two bicycles. These racks help solve the first-last mile conundrum in terms of potentially extending a transit rider’s travel range to and from their origin and/or final destination.

Takeaways and Opportunities

West Park Station is not simply a train station, rather a significant multi-modal transit hub, with 2,000 – 3,000 daily riders. It is significantly busier than Shaker Square and Little Italy Stations (at less than 1,000 riders), W. 25th St Station (1,600 riders), and Cudell Station (1,500 riders). The multi-modal function of the station makes this considerably more complex than for the average station. Transit rider infrastructure (shelters, signage, benches, etc.) are wholly lacking outside of station, despite high ridership, this issue warrants further study and preliminary explorations of a possible move of the West Park rapid station closer to Lorain Ave. (not discussed in this report).

The road network is generally safe, with some recommendations for improving arterials. With the exception of W. 150th St, most arterials seem to be wider than necessary for current usage. Because the streets are largely below capacity, there is room for road diets, pedestrian and bicycle

improvements. Neighborhood streets feel safe and have few crashes.

The pedestrian network has excellent sidewalk coverage despite that the overall environment is dominated by cars. Crossing areas are often compromised because of this. There is plenty of physical space for improvements, such as the neighborhood access to RTA station; as well as focusing on the poor NW to SE connection to W 143rd and W 140th near the schools.

The bicycle network is headed in right direction and progress is visible even though cars are still clearly prioritized in most situations. The Lorain Ave. bike shop appears to struggle to remain open. Road diet and bike lanes on Lorain Ave. can easily be continued west to Kamm’s Corners and Cleveland Metroparks’ Rocky River Reservation. There is an opportunity for 3.4-mile greenway along NW side of railroad tracks from Puritas Station to W. 112th & Madison. Overall there are good opportunities for neighborhood street network throughout residential areas.

Crime

The following analysis looks at crime in our study area, which mostly falls into Census Tract 1235.02. For contrast, we also consider aggregated averages of crime in the larger West Park area (18 census tracts), other local neighborhoods, and the City of Cleveland. The statistics here are based on census-tract level data, meaning they are averages of crime rates in areas that are larger than one census tract, i.e. the city and larger neighborhoods.

The two general types of crime considered are violent and property. Violent crime includes murder, rape, assault, and other violent acts, while property crimes include robbery, burglary, and thefts. The dataset was gathered from

NEOCANDO³⁵, which compiled, categorized, and aggregated crime reports from the Cleveland Police over the last decade.

We conducted this research to gain a quantitative understanding of crime and provide a larger and more neutral picture of positive or negative perceptions. It was often brought up in one form or another and is highly relevant to how people choose to live, work, play, and move around the study area, especially near the transit station. These trends are for the last 7 years. Many commented on longer term trends, which we couldn’t explore with available hard data.

Violent Crimes

From 2010 to 2017, per capita incidents of crime on the census tract level rose in the city. One can see our study area, Tract 1235.02, and West Park are typically seeing between one-third to one-half of the city-wide average. The study area rate of violent crime is slightly higher than the surrounding 18-tract West Park. There was an uptick in per capita crime, but it remains relatively stable. Some of this uptick is due to the smaller nature of our study area, which causes per capita measures to fluctuate much more per incident. Small population losses may also be the cause of per capita measures increasing. This slight trend is worth noting but is not as drastic as qualitative data suggest.

³⁵ “Neighborhood Data Warehouse”, NEOCANDO, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, Case Western University

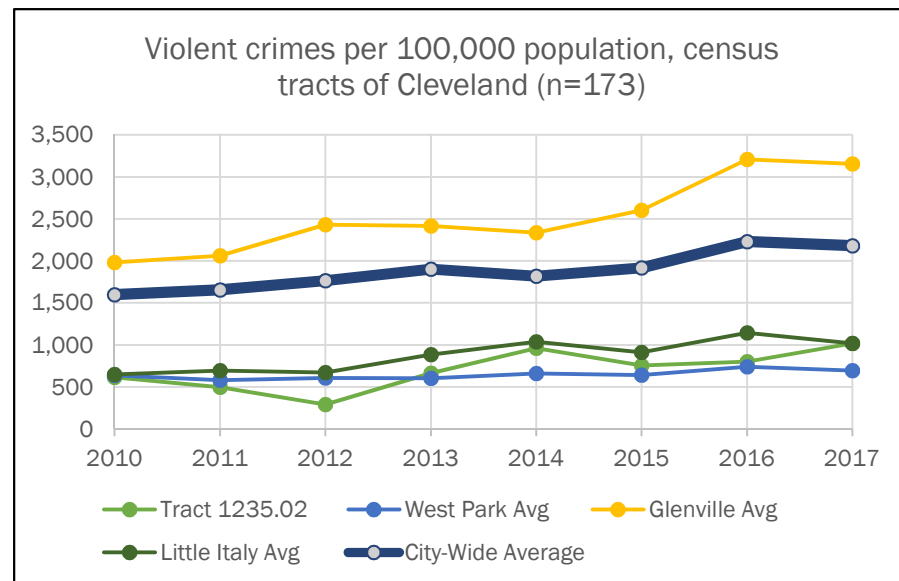


Figure 39: Violent Crime Analysis (NEOCANDO, 2017)

Property Crimes

The study area is seeing a per capita decline in property crimes since it peaked in 2013.³⁵ Again, the rates of property crime are similarly related to the city-wide average, West Park, and other neighborhoods. In this case, the study area is slightly lower than the West Park average. Overall, property crime occurs about 4 times more often than violent crime.

Takeaways

These graphs clearly show that the study area and its surrounding neighborhood are statistically safer than the rest of the city but have experienced a small uptick in violent crime. On the other hand, property crime seems to be decreasing, and the study area is safer in that respect than the greater West Park community.

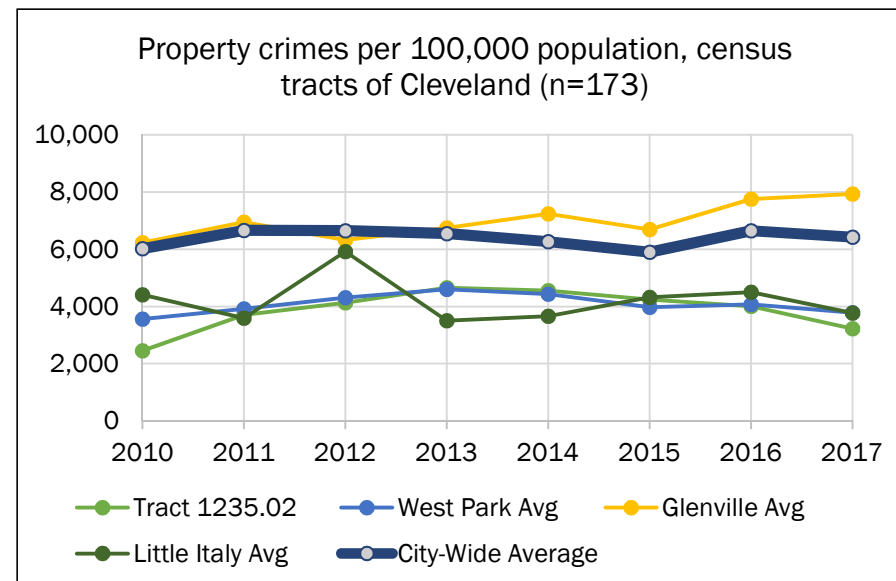


Figure 40: Property Crime Analysis (Viking Planning Group, 2019)

While these analyses try to explore crime trends granularly, they are, as explained before, subject to fluctuation and errors at such a small scale. The overarching takeaway is clear: **West Park and our study area are relatively safe communities with no indication of major change in the last eight years.**

With that said, our group still needs to explore how actual rates of crime and perceptions of crime are influenced by the built environment, which we suspect is a large factor given the isolated, poorly connected areas that lack enough activity to discourage criminal behavior or make people feel safe. There may be pockets of the study area that truly see more crime for these reasons, but wouldn't be reflected in census tract level analyses.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis identifies current strengths and weaknesses as well as future opportunities and threats. A SWOT analysis was conducted for the study area, focusing on big-picture items which have the potential to define the future of the neighborhood. The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were identified for the area. They will help to guide the remainder of the planning process.

Strengths

- Diverse middle-income neighborhood
- Excellent RTA bus and Rapid Transit connections
- Excellent highway access
- Centrally located on West Side
- Tight-knit residential population
- Historic neighborhood stability
- Low housing vacancy
- High traffic counts at key commercial sites
- Strong sense of neighborhood pride
- Active commercial/industrial district around Lorain and W. 150th St.

Weaknesses

- Excess of parking at RTA station and former Kmart
- Underutilized land at RTA station
- Lack of pedestrian connectivity to RTA station
- Lack of activities and attractions
- Dated retail complex at former Kmart
- Unpleasant pedestrian environment along Lorain Ave.
- High commercial vacancy along Lorain Ave.
- Lack of greenspace and limited tree canopy
- Excess pavement and other impervious surfaces

Opportunities

- Space for redevelopment at Kmart complex, RTA station, and along Lorain Ave.
- Relatively high neighborhood buying power to support retail development
- Potential for creation of additional green space
- Strong potential for job creation through modern light industrial development
- Potential to drive transit use by developing land at RTA station

- Potential to improve pedestrian connections along Lorain Ave. and to the RTA station
- Potential for immigrant and refugee populations to drive neighborhood revitalization and reutilization of vacant spaces

Threats

- Increased vacancy and decline in commercial areas
- Falling public transit ridership & funding
- Potential controversy regarding proposed development
- Fragmented ownership of vacant sites
- Continuing competition from other neighborhoods and suburbs for population and investment
- Declining brick and mortar retail worldwide due to rise of ecommerce
- Nearby competing retail centers
- Lack of funding resources and opportunities
- Limited availability of public subsidy

Existing Planning Studies

Connecting Cleveland 2020 Citywide Plan:³⁶

Approx. 100 years prior to Kamm’s Corners/West Park, the City of Cleveland was discovered as one of the most productive areas in Ohio. Because of its growth, many jurisdictions have branched themselves into neighborhoods and small communities. These communities created their own style, culture, and character stemming from many pioneers that started landmarks. Most of these establishments are still important to today’s residents.

Plan

The Cleveland 2020 Citywide plan was created to bring the connection of people and places together. In order for a plan

to become successful, it needs to not only focus on buildings or physical aspects of a development, but also recognizing the social behaviors that residents display in those particular areas. This current plan proposes pockets of areas that residents currently exhibit safety concerns and transform these pockets into something that most people desire. The main focus for Cleveland is to primarily propose areas that contain “pockets” of shopping/retail districts and use a mixed-use as a secondary option. As it moves forward, the ideas of 2020 are to supersede the 2000 planning studies of the Waterfront and Downtown.

Vision

The vision contains future goals that were discussed in the community meeting, led by stakeholders, CDCs, and different types of land owners. These are what’s desired in Cleveland:

- A renowned national leader in advanced medical/science technology
- Modernized industrial manufacturing industries
- Connections to all waterfront neighborhoods
- More Cultural Diversity
- Known to be a national hub for performing arts
- Safe family oriented/senior citizen focused establishment
- Walkable/Bicycle friendly neighborhoods

Action

This is a section that will broadcast upcoming physical improvements and/or events for the betterment of this society. When people change throughout the years, development should reflect that action. The list is very similar to the vision: land use/zoning alterations and maps to explain the change, transportation and infrastructure improvements are paramount for Clevelanders.

Connections

A great city is not just connections but using various paths or sources to main establishments throughout Cleveland. For example, planners want to expand bike and walking trails to every major place or open public space in Cleveland. This will also allow every access for those that don’t have the ability to drive or use public transportation. Neighboring parks can also be labeled as connections.

Assets

Cleveland wants to continue the legacy of strengthening places that serve people in different areas. These areas are the various farmer’s markets, locally owned businesses, vibrant theater and arts districts, sporting venues, and of course, lively neighborhoods, such as West Park. These are unique spots that give Cleveland a head start above most American cities.

Sustainability and Opportunity

Cleveland is the type of city that will conserve natural resources, while producing more jobs for those in dire need. The sustainability section has the same goal as the vision, but from different angles. For years, landfills in Cleveland has been very hazardous but there is a need to carefully clear and start new industrial development. Replenish old rail lines, industrial establishments, and commercial uses are all greatly needed.

Diversity

Cultural diversity is one of the major priorities that we should all embrace and welcome. We all are capable of bringing different and fresh concepts together in order for Cleveland to effectively operate. It is the city’s endeavor for everyone from all cultures to feel comfortable and make this land home.

There is also diversity in the type of homes and employment offered. At times, the diversity of home styles may be selected, depending on which ethnic group relate to that particular

³⁶ Collier, Freddy L.; *Cleveland Citywide Planning*, Cleveland City Planning Commission; pages 1-10; <http://planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/cwp/cpc.html>

layout. Diversity in every aspect adds character and warmth to a very prosperous city such as Cleveland.

Choice and Place

The goal is to make housing available for people to live anywhere they desire, instead of individuals living in certain units based on necessity. Cleveland is encouraging people to achieve higher education and fulfill careers in order to afford technology and vehicles for long distance travel. To reduce discrimination and redlining, plans are starting to include a certain percentage of affordable housing in most neighborhoods. The key to a walkable and bike friendly neighborhood is to provide all uses and function within a very short distance of residential homes.

District 1: Kamm's Corners; Cleveland City Planning Commission; 2019³⁷

Starting in 1898, Puritas Spring Park was the place that made Kamm's Corners a historical area for Oswald Kamm to open his business. After WWI, in 1923, urban planning was established because diverse establishments and mixed-uses were able to spread out due to the access to streetcars.

There are assets that make Kamm's unique from other areas: strong residential area, connection to the Rocky River and Gunning Park, rapid station, and Fairview Hospital.

They believe they need more retail that is complimentary to their lifestyles and prefer them located along Lorain and Rocky River Drive.

2011 West Park/Lorain Ave. Planning Study³⁸

This particular study exquisitely expresses the goals to redevelop a new layout for Kamm's Corners of the West Park neighborhood. The intent is to provide an already well-

established community with a new cohesive and inviting district.

The strategies to implement a fully functional corridor is to create a plan that will reiterate a promising future for this neighborhood. The future of this neighborhood/corridor is to create public investment, private redevelopment, and multi-modal transportation initiatives within Ward 17 boundary. True investment can really become the source of West Park's success if Lorain Ave. (between W. 160th St. and the RTA Rapid Station) offers a large connection of public transportation linking to major employment and retail hubs.

City Architecture has identified three strategies that would be resourceful for the planning process- Understanding the existing conditions of the neighborhood, Rediscovery of the neighborhood, and Envisioning a true functional neighborhood.

Understanding

The first step to understanding the existing conditions is to form community engagement. Stakeholders, CDCs, advocates, property owners, and West Park residents generate meetings to gather the history, demographics, and their lifestyles of their neighborhood. This information is critical to determine what type of strategies to recommend. Besides generating a new design, one must visit the site (being that is infrastructure, public transportation, and buildings) and develop an economic plan. Demographic studies are vital when viewing the social behaviors and cultures of West Park. Lorain Ave. is considered a node or landmark that historically connects these lifestyles.

Since Lorain Ave., is a transit corridor, it serves and presents the street to be a business and retail corridor. The goal is to spread the increase of public transportation, attracting patrons towards the rapid station; this will nudge for a safer

atmosphere. While scanning the site, many stakeholders and developers check Lorain's land use and determine if that particular function is compatible to the current zoning.

Rediscovering

After people understand the conditions at hand, it identifies principles to begin the plan. Rediscovering is redevelopment. Through these principles, it allows the site to separate in four distinct areas. Each study area that are physically shown through maps and drawings, tends to overlap at the same size of a 1/2 mile diameter. The proposed areas noted for improvement are rather similar to the current study area; The West Park Transit Station, Southern Commercial Gateway, Lorain-Triskett Triangle, and Mixed-Use Main Street Corridor.

Envisioning

The future lies ahead for new changes extending to revised items. Rediscovering and Envisioning tend to overlap with discovering the problem and envisioning a change. The project tends to convey to expand mixed-use in each area so Transit Oriented Development would be easier to utilize. Rediscovery may be a source of identifying and solving issues. Patrons show their concern by expressing why these areas are lacking physiological, emotive, and economical connection. The goal is to merge these areas to express solidarity. Axonometric drawings better illustrate what type of buildings and streetscapes that would better enhance this neighborhood.

Within the Envisioning scope, Lorain Ave. added features that would help tie the four sites- new trees and green, crosswalk treatments, new setbacks/parking, and improved utility locations. Infrastructure design along with compatible extensions to mix-use can easily draw people to Lorain Ave. The main street helps to provide a mass landscape that people and residents are easily accustomed to. People can have many

³⁷ Collier, Freddy L.; District 1: Kamm's Corners; Cleveland City Planning Commission; 2019 <http://planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/cwp/districts.php?dt=dist1&dn=kamm>

³⁸ TLCI; West Park/Lorain Avenue Transportation & Redevelopment Plan. Re-establishing a Unified Lorain Avenue Corridor; August 2011. pgs. 1-65; <http://planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/cwp/other/KammsCornersTLCI.pdf>

options to either engage activities and/or family-oriented events, not only on the main corridor, but easy transferred access surrounding Triskett Rd./Lorain Ave. landscapes as well as other surrounding plots.

Kamm's Corners Strategic Plan - Vision 2016:³⁹

To make strategic planning essential, it was reported that in 1977, a group of community organizers thought it was important to revitalize their historical neighborhood. Their goal was to rehab the aesthetics and safety issues without disturbing the character, identity, and original purpose of this site. At this time, leaders and advocates wish to continue their legacy of various landmarks, which includes the Farmers Market, The Hooley, and the Asphalt. With these ideas in mind, it strikes ideas to commence a storefront renovation program, bringing more businesses and other important land uses that will help enhance Ward 19 between Lorain Ave and Rocky River Drive. These changes will cause the West Park neighborhood to become one of the most attractive, memorable, and historical sites in Cleveland.

“Our ‘Vision-2016’ is the picture of a connected community characterized by multi-generational and multi-cultural harmony; a solid, safe, livable community, with standards-constantly growing and improving.”³⁹

During this study, community leaders wanted to involve land owners, business owners, and residents to share their views on what changes need to be made to service to future goals. Mainly their concerns are safety, better road quality, diverse retail options, upgrading the educational system, a providing a more family-oriented atmosphere.

Definitions

This section of the report, the researchers encountered ways to facilitate who to serve and the purpose for their goals. Each form of definition conveys step by step process for any recommended solutions in Kamm's Corners. Each resolution noted are categorized in different levels- high, mid, and detail levels. Each of those levels presents its own strategy.

High Level:

- **Mission** - Overall Purpose
- **Vision** - Image of desired future
- **Values** - Morals and beliefs that will drive a unwavering culture for West Park

Mid-Level:

- **Goals** - Time-Based end points for a mission/vision
- **Objectives** - sub goals before reaching final goals
- **Strategies** - procedures to move towards goals

Detailed Level:

- **Key Actions** - Day by day activities that need to be completed for plans and goals
- **Required Resources** - Time, money, and supplies (technologies) required for execution
- **Owners** - An individual or team who is responsible for key action
- **Measures** - Due-dates and completed schedules

Vision

The key is to develop a culture that is consistent with morals and values of the overall community which will eventually generate a standard. The standard will “stamp” the society's description. The planning process was very intricate. In order to be sensitive to the community's needs, the moralistic value help find preliminary procedures for substantial outcomes of

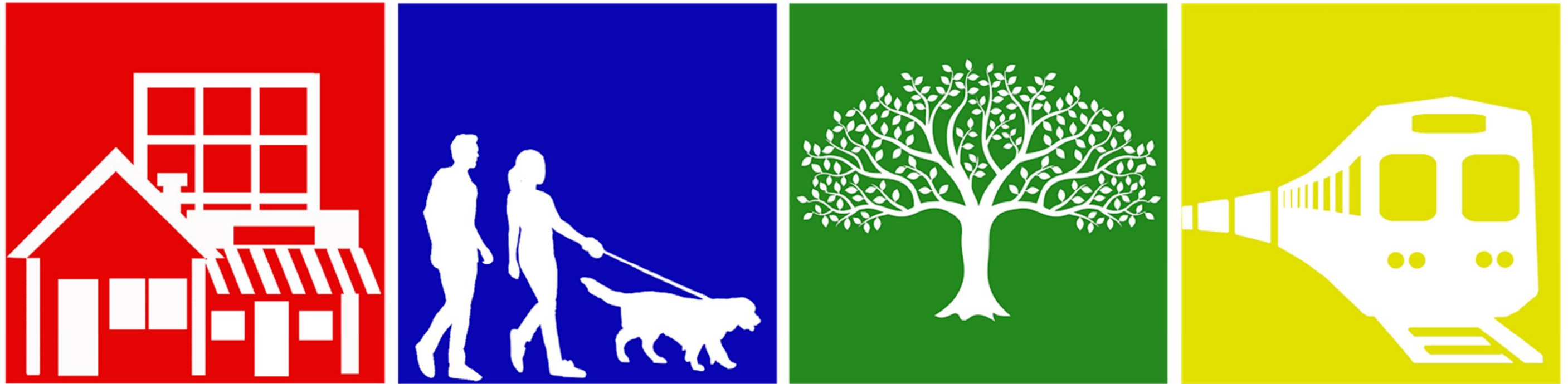
change. Research is rather similar to our procedure of findings, which could be based on the society's feedback of survey, interviews, community meetings, and retreats. Among all the different type of roles that people pose, their morals allot the seniors to become the major priority in west Park. Since people seek to moralize the society, economic conditions may be a contributing factor, there is a desire to minimize bars and increase family-based restaurants and/or require establishments that serve alcohol after certain hours. Health and wellness are also essential to the plan. There should be easy access to hospitals and recreation/open public spaces (to prevent unpleasant occurrences).

There are efforts within the block groups and CDC venues to fund and greatly encourage diversity, find factor that contribute to blighted communities and foreclosure crisis.

As a review, the planning committee provides a chart expressing the highest and best use of each Kamm's Corners attraction and how the senior focused initiative is achieved as its brand or image.

To build revenue, is to show a mix-use of retail- locally and nationally. The residents seek more to encourage more private businesses. To embrace the moralistic character, the products seem to always feel authentic and the food is healthier.

³⁹ Kamms's Corners Development Corporation; Kamm's Corners Development Corporation Strategic Plan- March 2013 (Vision 2016); March 2013; pages 1-61; http://kammscorners.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/StrategicPlan_Vision2016.pdf



Market Study

Single & Two-Family Housing Analysis

Cataloging Methods

It was important for us to understand the current built environment of the study area. In order to create plans which, integrate with the existing neighborhood, we needed to catalog existing housing types. To do this, we surveyed the study area identifying each type of housing structure. The housing typology of the study area is comprised of 726 housing structures and 33 apartment buildings. Seven types of housing units were identified by characteristics or construction: Colonial, Bungalow, Ranch, Side-by-Side, Cleveland Double, Historic Brick, and Apartments.

Typology

There were a variety of each of our housing types in terms of material used and aesthetics. The four main single-family housing types were Ranch, Bungalow, Colonial and Historic Brick. These were designated by having one, one and a half, and two stories respectively.

The Ranch is characterized as a one level single-family house with a low-pitched roof. Variations include architectural attic windows and front porches. There is a total of 20 units in the study area.



Figure 41. Ranch Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

The Bungalow is characterized as one and a half story single-family home with a front porch. The second story is approximately one half the size of the first floor, causing dramatic rooflines. The Bungalow typically has bedrooms on the first and second floor. There is a total of 21 units in the study area.



Figure 42. Bungalow Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

The Colonial is characterized as a two-story single-family home with or without a front porch. The second story is the same size as the first floor making the front of the house linear. All of the bedrooms are typically on the second floor, with the first floor containing a kitchen, dining, and living rooms. Variations include: center or offset placement of the front door, and architectural elements as awnings, shutters, or canopies. There is a total of 196 units in the study area.



Figure 43. Colonial Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

Historic Brick housing type is characterized as a colonial or bungalow constructed of brick on all sides, with high levels of architectural detail. Most brick bungalows have enclosed front porches while colonials have flat fronts. This architectural style is heavily seen throughout the remaining neighborhoods of West Park. While there are hundreds of this housing type seen throughout the neighborhood, there are a total of 41 units in the study area.



Figure 44. Historic Brick Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

Two-family housing came in two distinct types: The Side-by-Side and the Cleveland Double.

Side-by-Sides were constructed post-WWII and were an affordable housing options from returning G.I.s. These are characterized as two-story two-family homes with a shared central demising wall. The second story is same size of first floor making the front of the house linear. All of the bedrooms are typically on the second floor, with the first floor containing a kitchen, dining, and living room. Architectural elements are minimal, and variations include front or side entrance doors. There is a total of 313 units in the study area.



Figure 45. Side-by-Side Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

The Cleveland Double is characterized as two-story two-family homes separated by floor. Each unit has front porches and separate front entrances on the first floor. Roofs are usually high pitched with third floor windows for attic storage or additional living areas. There is a total of 35 units in the study area.



Figure 46. Cleveland Double Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

There are a variety of apartment buildings seen throughout the study area. These buildings are constructed out of brick and have multiple stories. They vary by size, number of units, age, and architectural elements. There are 33 apartment buildings in the study area.



Figure 47. Apartment Buildings Housing in the Study Area
(Viking Planning Group)

The following map provides locations of the seven different types of housing typologies.

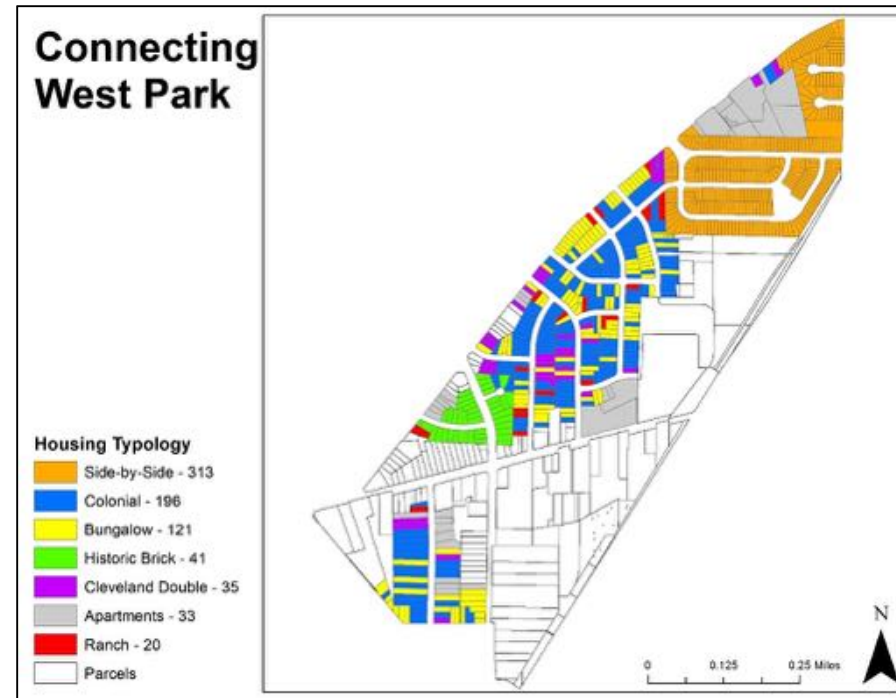


Figure 48. Housing Typology Map (Viking Planning Group)

Housing Analysis Data Collection

We looked at variety of housing variables for the study area, combined tracts, and the city as a whole to better understand the physical breakdown of the structures as well as the make-up of residents who reside within. The “Combined Tracts” make up the 16 tracts surrounding our study area.

The housing stock in the study area and combined tract were built much later than the city as a whole. The most housing was built from 1940 to 1949 within the local areas, whereas the majority of housing was built before 1939 throughout the city of Cleveland.

	Study Area	Combined Tracts	City of Cleveland
Total Housing Units	1458	27611	211902
1939 or Earlier	446	9,060	113,894
1940 to 1949	521	5,771	23,563
1950 to 1959	125	7,318	27,175
1960 to 1969	187	2,632	14,819
1970 to 1979	84	1,171	11,011
1980 to 1989	58	601	5,492
1990 to 1999	37	587	6,038
2000 to 2009	0	440	7,803
2010 or later	0	31	2,107

Figure 49. Housing History (ACS, 2019)

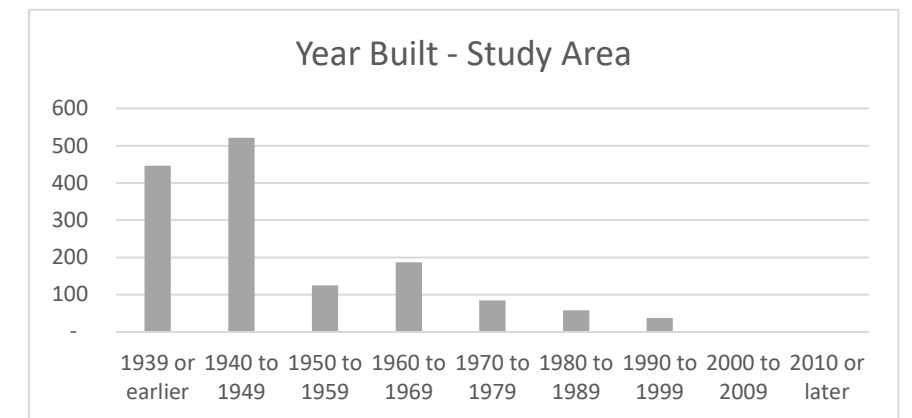


Figure 50. Housing History (ACS, 2019)

69% of the units in the study area are owner occupied which is slightly less than the city at 58%, but much less than the combined tracts at 39%.⁴⁰ These numbers reflect a lot of the narrative around the stable owner-occupied residents of West Park.

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Occupied HU	1,329	100%	24,874	100%	168,496	100%
Owner-Occupied	410	31%	15,105	61%	70,454	42%
Renter- Occupied	919	69%	9,769	39%	98,042	58%

Figure 51. Housing Occupancy (ACS, 2019)

⁴⁰ (United States Census, 2019)

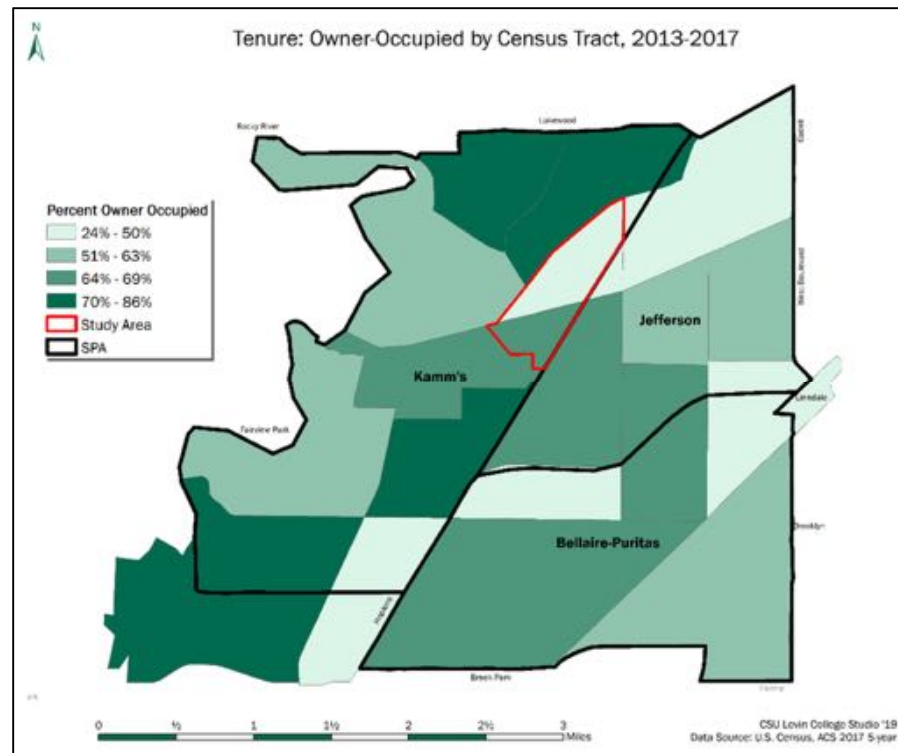


Figure 52. Owner Occupancy (ACS DP04, 2017)

Vacancy in the study area is at 9% which indicates that there is a demand for more housing. Similarly, vacancy is at 10% for the combined area. Compare this to the city as a whole at 20%.⁴¹

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total HU	1,458	100%	27,611	100%	211,902	100%
Occupied	1,329	91%	24,874	90%	168,496	80%
Vacant	129	9%	2,737	10%	43,406	20%

Figure 53. Housing Vacancy (ACS, 2017)

About 50% of the residents in all three groups are burdened by the cost of living. It is important to keep in mind that all socioeconomic groups can be affected by the cost of living. To be burdened by housing is when you pay over 30% of your monthly income on rent/mortgage. Similarly, to be severely burdened, you pay over 50% of your monthly income.

⁴¹ (United States Census, 2019)

⁴² (United States Census, 2019)

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	919	100%	9,769	100%	98,042	100%
< 10.0%	59	6%	466	5%	4,283	4%
10.0 to 14.9%	61	7%	834	9%	6,369	6%
15.0 to 19.9%	67	7%	741	8%	8,926	9%
20.0 to 24.9%	171	19%	1,187	12%	8,489	9%
25.0 to 29%	23	3%	682	7%	11,374	12%
30.0 to 34.9%	134	15%	1,025	10%	7,945	8%
35.0 to 39.9%	77	8%	708	7%	5,420	6%
40.0 to 49.9%	54	6%	827	8%	7,669	8%
50.0% or more	242	26%	2,527	26%	27,904	28%
Not computed	31	3%	772	8%	9,663	10%

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	919	100%	9,769	100%	98,042	100%
< 29%	381	41%	3,910	40%	39,441	40%
Cost Burdened	265	29%	2,560	26%	21,034	21%
Severely Cost Burdened	242	26%	2,527	26%	27,904	28%
Not computed	31	3%	772	8%	9,663	10%

Figure 54. Housing Burden (ACS, 2017)

The median household income in the study area is at 38,034 which is significantly higher than the median household income of the city as a whole as 27,854.

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total households	1,329	100%	24,874	100%	168,496	100%
Less than \$10,000	146	11%	2,715	11%	33,376	20%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	95	7%	1,767	7%	17,195	10%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	204	15%	3,265	13%	26,901	16%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	177	13%	2,958	12%	20,909	12%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	221	17%	3,921	16%	22,798	14%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	221	17%	5,109	21%	23,380	14%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	146	11%	2,291	9%	10,832	6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	91	7%	2,105	8%	8,801	5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9	1%	452	2%	2,278	1%
\$200,000 or more	19	1%	291	1%	2,026	1%
Median HH Income (dollars)	38,034		41,491*		27,854	
Mean HH Income (dollars)	47,334		50,908		41,643	

Figure 55. Household Income (ACS B06011, 2017)

The combined West side census tracts and the City of Cleveland have a very similar distribution of rents, with roughly 25 percent under \$500, 60 percent between \$500 to \$999, and

another 15 percent between \$1,000 and \$1,499. In our study area, 92 percent of rents fall between \$500 and \$999.⁴²

However, the median rent in our study area is on par with that of the City of Cleveland

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied units paying rent	910	100%	9,272	100%	93,509	100%
Less than \$500	22	2%	2,020	22%	23,791	25%
\$500 to \$999	838	92%	5,623	61%	55,018	59%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	50	5%	1,478	16%	12,214	13%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	0	0%	110	1%	1,787	2%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	0	0%	33	0%	462	0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0%	8	0%	159	0%
\$3,000 or more	0	0%	0	0%	78	0%
No rent paid	9	1%	497	5%	4,533	5%
Median rent (dollars)	684		746*		678	

Figure 56. Rent Values (ACS S2502, 2017)

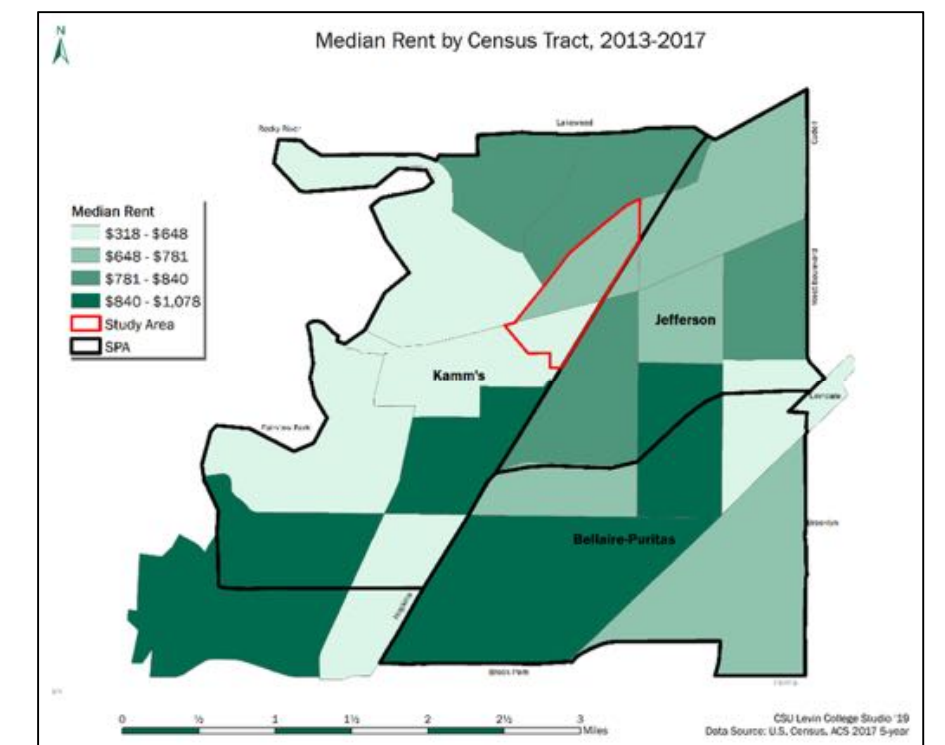


Figure 57. Mapped Median Rent (ACS, 2017)

In the City of Cleveland, 76 percent of households are valued at less than \$100,000, as compared to 64 percent in the West side tracts, and just 55 percent in our study area. The majority of the households in our study area, at 44 percent, are valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000, which is nearly double that of the households valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000 in the west side tracts, and more than triple that of those in the City of Cleveland.⁴³

The median home value of homes in our study area is nearly one and a half times that of the City of Cleveland.

	Study Area		Combined Tracts		City of Cleveland	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Owner-occupied units	410	100%	15,105	100%	70,454	100%
Less than \$50,000	80	20%	1,856	12%	21,258	30%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	143	35%	7,870	52%	32,591	46%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	179	44%	3,896	26%	9,495	13%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	8	2%	1,217	8%	3,511	5%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	0	0%	188	1%	1,834	3%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0	0%	35	0%	1,039	1%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0%	19	0%	509	1%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0%	24	0%	217	0%
Median value (dollars)	95,600		87,661*		67,600	

Figure 58. Housing Values (ACS, 2017)

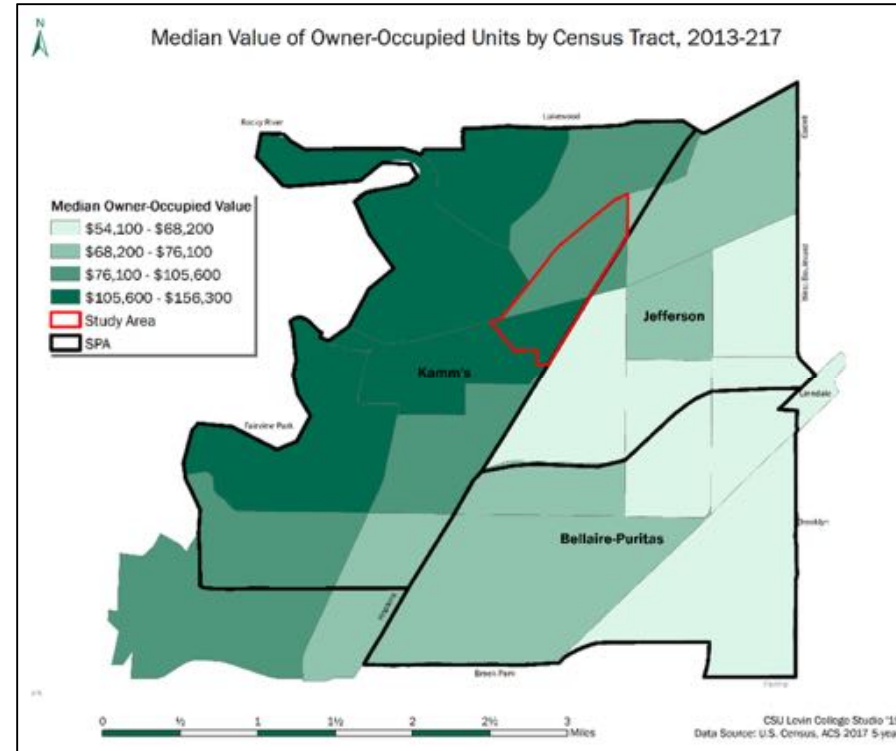


Figure 59. Housing Values (ACS, 2017)

In order to determine the demand for housing in our study area, and at what price points, we needed to first analyze the existing supply.

It is assumed that an owner-occupied household can afford a home priced at up to three times their household income. Renter-occupied households can afford an apartment priced at 30% of their household income.

The supply of housing in each price range was gathered using Census data.

The demand was calculated by multiplying the proportion of households in each income range over the total number of households, to the total number of owner-occupied or renter-occupied households, respectively. The gap, then, is the difference between demand and supply.

In our study area, gaps in owner-occupied housing exist for homes priced at less than \$30,000, and \$150,000 or more, and there is an oversupply of owner-occupied housing priced between \$30,000 and \$150,000.⁴⁴

Gaps exist in renter-occupied housing for units priced at \$374 or less, and \$1,250 or more, and there is an oversupply of renter-occupied housing priced between \$375 and \$1,249.⁴⁵

Therefore, our study area is in need of heavily subsidized renter-occupied housing, higher-end rental options, and higher-priced homes. Though there is a gap in owner-occupied units valued at less than \$30,000, this is not a realistic product.

Household Income Range	No. of Households	Housing Price Range				Supply		Demand		Gap	
		Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied		Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
		Low	High	Low	High						
Total	1329					410	919	410	919		
Less than \$10,000	146	\$ -	\$ 29,999	\$ -	\$ 249	8	9	45	101	(37)	(92)
\$10,000 to \$14,999	95	\$ 30,000	\$ 44,999	\$ 250	\$ 374	59	11	29	66	30	(55)
\$15,000 to \$24,999	204	\$ 45,000	\$ 74,999	\$ 375	\$ 624	84	340	63	141	21	199
\$25,000 to \$34,999	177	\$ 75,000	\$ 104,999	\$ 625	\$ 874	99	391	55	122	44	269
\$35,000 to \$49,999	221	\$ 105,000	\$ 149,999	\$ 875	\$ 1,249	152	159	68	153	84	6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	221	\$ 150,000	\$ 224,999	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,874	8	9	68	153	(80)	(144)
\$75,000 to \$99,999	146	\$ 225,000	\$ 299,999	\$ 1,875	\$ 2,499	0	0	45	101	(45)	(101)
\$100,000 to \$149,999	91	\$ 300,000	\$ 449,999	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,749	0	0	28	63	(28)	(63)
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9	\$ 450,000	\$ 599,999	\$ 3,750	\$ 4,999	0	0	3	6	(3)	(6)
\$200,000 or more	19	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	0	0	6	13	(6)	(13)

Figure 60. Housing Gap Analysis (ACS, 2017)

Multi-Family Residential Market Analysis

The product in consideration for the West Park neighborhood consists of expanding on the residential base through multifamily (apartment) development with potential for affordable townhomes interspersed throughout the study area. The breakout of multifamily housing will include a senior housing element to accommodate an aging population in the neighborhood.

⁴³ (United States Census, 2019)

⁴⁴ (United States Census, 2019)

⁴⁵ (United States Census, 2019)

Current Rental Conditions

The housing tenure for the broader, 18-census tract area of focus, which includes the West Park study area, has a relatively high renter-occupied population (39%). Because of this, the area is well-acclimated and positioned to continue drawing upon a population of residents looking to rent. The majority of renter-occupied units range from less than \$500 to \$999 gross rent, indicating the area is relatively affordable for a transient, new-to-the-area, just-starting-out, or lower-income user. With respect to comparable neighborhoods on Cleveland’s west-side (Detroit Shoreway, Tremont, Ohio City), West Park is positioned to draw upon a broader, more diverse population of prospective tenants because of its affordability. As such, any future housing development would maintain the sense of inclusivity and accessibility that has characterized the area for decades.

Potential Customers and Competitive Supply

The target customer for multifamily development in West Park is far-reaching and broad. Most immediately would be those persons looking to relocate to the west-side of Cleveland, hoping to avoid the steep price-tag of some other neighborhoods and still experience the livelihood and amenities of an urban environment. This customer might be empty-nesters looking to escape the suburbs for something new, millennials and young families just starting out, people working in the area and nearby labor market, and out-of-towners moving to Cleveland. Both the market-rate and affordable housing elements would pool from this base.

The senior housing element will accommodate an older population, closer in origin to the immediate area. These persons could be people coming back to be closer to family or looking to stay nearby and in the neighborhood in which they have lived.

The market-rate user has the potential to draw upon a much larger geography than the affordable/low-income and senior

user. As such, the whole county could effectively be taken into consideration for where the customer is coming from. Perhaps more realistically would be those people closer to the area from inner-ring suburbs on the west and east side of Cuyahoga County, and throughout the city of Cleveland. People in the county looking to move to the central city are also considered in this group, although to a lesser extent than those more proximate to the area in question.

Name	Location	Rent Range	Unit Breakout
The Bingham	Warehouse District	\$1,224 - \$3,119	1 - 3 bdrm
Mueller Lofts	St. Clair-Superior	\$1,100 - \$2,100	Studio - 3 bdrm
West 25 Lofts	Ohio City	\$1,186 - \$2,940	1 - 3 bdrm
The Edison	Gordon Square	\$1,345+	1 - 3 bdrm

Figure 61. Market Rate Competitive Supply
(Viking Planning Group)

The affordable housing user will most likely come from somewhere near both the west side of Cleveland and the western suburbs of Cuyahoga County. With less opportunity for mobility, these people will be looking to move close by, or move within the neighborhood.

Name	Location	Rent Range	Unit Breakout
Lakeshore Beach	Waterloo Arts	Income based, HVC welcome	2 - 3 bdrm
Langston Commons	Central	Income based, Subsidized	2 - 4 bdrm
Carter Manor		HCV welcome	1 - 2 bdrm
Tremont Point	Tremont	\$811 - \$1,967	1 - 3 bdrm

Figure 62. Affordable Competitive Supply (Viking Planning Group)

The senior housing user will be an older population (65+), and similar to affordable housing users, will have less options for mobility. As such, this customer will most likely come from the inner-ring west side suburbs (Lakewood, Fairview Park, Brook Park, and Rocky River), and the west-side of Cleveland, closest to West Park.

Name	Location
Judson Park	University Circle
Valley Road Villa	Old Brooklyn
Rockport Senior Living	Rocky River

Figure 63. Market Rate Senior Housing Competition
(Viking Planning Group)

Name	Location
Mercedarian Plaza	Tremont
Colman Court	Detroit Shoreway
Arbor Park Village	Central

Figure 64. Affordable Senior Housing Competition
(Viking Planning Group)

Office Market Analysis

The proposed development is office space in West Park. Proposed office space would be modern and of standard, if non-remarkable quality. The new office space can be located at either site under analysis in our West Park study area, the Kmart site at Lorain Ave. and W. 150th St. or the RTA parking lot. The preliminary vision for new office space at either site entails office space as part of a mixed-use development, likely including residential and retail components. At the RTA site, the mixed-use development would be transit-oriented given the proximity of RTA’s Red Line. Both sites allow for excellent highway access via a roughly five-minute drive to both I-90 and I-71.

Said office space would likely be new construction. At the RTA site, no buildings exist and so any office space would definitely be new construction. At the Kmart site, while the Kmart building is vacant and ready for adaptive reuse, big box stores typically do not easily convert to office space due to their layout and lack of sunlight. The parking lot in front of the Kmart building is oversized, and office space could be built along Lorain Avenue along with residential and retail components. Still, with the right tenants, office reuse of the Kmart building cannot be completely ruled out.

Potential Tenants

Potential tenants of general-purpose office space include professional services such as finance, law, and accounting, insurance, engineering, IT, and other small businesses. Tenants could include firms located in the area in search of new space. The West Park study area is centrally located on West Side of the Cuyahoga River, adjacent to Cleveland neighborhoods as well as the suburbs of Lakewood, Rocky River, Fairview Park, Brooklyn, and Brook Park.

Required Amenities

Tenants discussed above typically care about transportation and access for both employees and customers or clients, along with nearby retail amenities for employees, particularly lunch restaurants. The West Park area has ample such amenities, mostly clustered roughly a mile to the west of the Kmart and RTA sites, at the Kamm’s Corners intersection of Lorain Ave. and Rocky River Dr. While outside of the study area, these establishments would be convenient for office workers at these sites with access to cars. Office development at these sites could subsequently catalyze development further east along Lorain Avenue.

Local Competition

West Park has traditionally not been a neighborhood with extensive office presence. In general, the west sides of both Cleveland and Cuyahoga County as a whole have never had as much office presence as downtown, the east suburbs, and the south suburbs. Competitive inventory would likely cover a wide geographic area.

If either site were developed into a true mixed-use development, this would create competitive advantage over typical suburban office parks, making true competition limited to other mixed-use neighborhoods such as the central business district, Ohio City, Lakewood, and Westlake’s Crocker Park neighborhood.

Weaknesses

As discussed above, West Park and the west side of Cleveland in general has never had a strong office market. Cleveland’s western neighborhoods have traditionally had a “blue-collar” character, with West Park in particular famous for being a home for Cleveland’s Police and Firefighters. Because the area is not a traditional location for corporate offices, it could be difficult to convince companies to locate there. Additionally, firms often locate in business districts because of proximity to other businesses, allowing easy access to clients and other business relationships. Corporate headquarters often have less of a need for this kind of proximity as do professional services firms, and therefore, a corporate headquarters in the area as part of a greater mixed-use development could be feasible.

Financial feasibility is also an issue. While a full feasibility analysis was not performed as part of this analysis, it is known that new office construction is expensive, and rents for new offices must be correspondingly expensive to make a project feasible. Due to high rents, only established, successful firms would likely be able to afford to locate in such a development.

However, due to the inherent amenities present in the area, if a visionary development is sold to a potential tenant, office space could be feasible in the area.

Supply & Demand

The following market statistics are sourced from Newmark Knight Frank’s Cleveland office, from the fourth quarter of 2018:⁴⁶

	Total Inventory (SF)	Vacancy Rate	Average Asking Rent
CBD	18,209,631	18.7%	\$19.11
East	8,108,707	12.9%	\$19.44
South	6,008,548	10.7%	\$16.26
Southwest	1,328,912	16.3%	\$13.22
West	3,196,955	16.2%	\$14.60
Suburban Total	18,643,122	13.0%	\$16.84
Market Total	36,852,753	15.8%	\$17.97

Figure 65. Office Market Data (Viking Planning Group)

The West Park neighborhood falls under the “West” submarket in Newmark’s classifications. The West submarket starts at the Cuyahoga River and expands into Lorain County roughly north of Interstate 480, through the cities of Lorain and Elyria and ending around Vermillion. It is apparent from the above statistics that the West and Southwest markets as a whole are the smallest and weakest submarkets in the area, with both high vacancies and low rents. (It should be noted that CBD vacancies in Cleveland are typically skewed by vacant obsolete properties such as 925 Euclid Ave., which have been undergoing residential conversion in recent years.)

Conclusions

The RTA and Kmart sites in West Park possess several advantages which would make them amenable to office

⁴⁶ Hoover, N., & Orgovan, M. Cleveland Office Market: 4Q2018. Newmark Knight Frank. Retrieved from http://www.terrycoyne.com/uploads_pdf/4Q18-Cleveland-Office-Market.pdf

development. The neighborhoods have excellent transportation connectivity, with access to Interstates 71 and 90 as well as RTA’s Red Line and several bus lines. The Kamm’s Corners area features several retail and dining amenities which would be attractive to employees, and retail vacancies along Lorain Ave. closer to the study area could potentially be improved with the presence of new office employees.

At the same time, the area is hampered by the weakness of the western office market. The west side office market suffers from lower rents and higher vacancies than other parts of Greater Cleveland, and West Park in particular has never been a historic home for offices. Because companies often like to locate nearby other businesses, it could be difficult to convince tenants to locate there.

Due to these factors, it is difficult to see commoditized suburban-style office space succeeding in the area.

The Alternative: Differentiation through Mixed-Use Development

The alternative to commoditized suburban-style office development is mixed-use development with a strong sense of place and strong amenities. In this way, office development at West Park could differentiate itself from the competition. West Park and Kamm’s Corners is a unique Cleveland neighborhood with unique amenities and it would need to be sold as such to be successful.

Industrial Market Analysis

Potential Tenants

Even as manufacturing employment has seen a gradual decline since the glory days of American industry, Cleveland continues to have a strong manufacturing presence. Due to automation

and advanced technologies, manufacturing requires less employees than in years past. The area could be home to a smaller to medium sized manufacturing company or a logistics facility. Due to the increasing prevalence of online shopping, discussed above, logistics and fulfillment centers are seeing major growth across the country.

Potential Reuse of the Kmart Building

An interesting alternative to retail reuse or demolition of the Kmart building on Lorain Ave. is the repurposing of the building for light industrial or logistics usage. According to a January 2019 report from real estate firm CBRE, 24 retail-to-industrial conversions have happened in the United States since 2016, including two in the Cleveland area⁴⁷. Former big box stores feature dock doors, parking, and wide enough column spacing to accommodate light industrial uses. As ecommerce has taken large portions of market share away from brick-and-mortar retailers, creative reuse of spaces such as the Kmart building will become increasingly necessary, and adaptive reuse of big boxes will be an important issue for the real estate industry to tackle in coming decades.

Required Amenities

Amenities required are similar to those required for an office. Transportation connections and highway access are even more important for logistics facilities than they are for offices, but the site’s proximity to I-90 and I-71 ensures competitiveness. Manufacturing and logistics operations require proximity to workforce. In recent years, the proliferation of industrial facilities in the outer suburbs has made access difficult for working-class city residents, termed “job sprawl.” West Park’s location on the west side of Cleveland, connected to public transportation, does not suffer from this problem.

The area’s access to retail amenities in West Park and Kamm’s Corners carries the same appeal for an industrial use as it does for an office use, discussed earlier.

Supply & Demand

The following market statistics are sourced from Newmark Knight Frank’s Cleveland office, from the fourth quarter of 2018: ⁴⁸

	Total Inventory (SF)	Vacancy Rate	Average Asking Rent
Downtown	74,402,029	8.5%	\$3.14
Northeast	56,088,781	4.6%	\$5.48
Northwest	23,171,129	2.3%	\$4.42
South Central	36,167,308	8.5%	\$3.72
Southeast	67,623,779	4.5%	\$5.37
Southwest	28,620,215	3.1%	\$5.36
Market Total	286,073,241	5.8%	\$4.24

Figure 66. Industrial Market Data (Viking Planning Group)

Newmark categorizes West Park in the “Downtown” market for industrial purposes, however, local industrial market is notable for being more similar across the various submarkets. According to Newmark’s report, local industrial vacancies have plummeted in the past decade, dropping from around 12% to around 6% from 2010-2018. Rents have steadily climbed during the same time period. Today, the market is tight and developers are taking notice, with new projects planned across the region including Weston, Inc.’s new industrial park at Berea and Madison roads in Cleveland.

⁴⁷ Denight, L., & Egan, D. (2019, January 30). Trading Places: Retail Properties Converted to Industrial Use. Retrieved from CBRE US MarketFlash website: <https://www.cbre.us/research-and-reports/trading-places-retail-properties-converted-to-industrial-use>

⁴⁸ Hoover, N., & Orgovan, M. Cleveland Industrial Market: 4Q2018. Newmark Knight Frank. Retrieved from http://www.terrycoyne.com/uploads_pdf/4Q18-Cleveland-Industrial-Market.pdf

Conclusions

Use of vacant sites in West Park for light industrial or logistical purposes when compared to an office use enjoys many of the same positives as an office use with less of the negatives. The area's proximity to transportation connections is equally vital to both types of uses, however, the west side's relatively weak office market makes office less likely to succeed unless it was sold as part of a truly visionary mixed-use development.

Contrarily, an industrial use at the site, due to a tight market and a neighborhood with a strong manufacturing presence, makes industrial an excellent use as well as a way to provide job opportunities for local residents. Light industrial or logistics use in the area could be more financially feasible than new office construction.

Retail Market Analysis

The retail market niche analysis considers the overall demand for individual types of retail in a market area based on the current supply and overall area spending power. The total population of the West Park market area is 116,352 people with 24,874 households. The median income for the area is \$41,490 annually making the total annual spending power for the West Park market area \$1,032,038,843 – a pretty significant spending power due to the density of the area.

Retail Market Area Characteristics	
Total Population	116,352
Total Households	24,874
Median Income	\$ 41,491
Total Household Income	\$ 1,032,038,843

Figure 67. Spending Power (Viking Planning Group)

The retail niche analysis takes in consideration the average size store for each category of retail and compares with the total existing square footage against the square footage that would

be supported with the area's spending power. This is calculated by the average amount of income residents spend at each category of retail.

The retail niche analysis outlines demand for several market areas that were previously provided by the old Kmart; shoes & clothing, pharmacy, household appliances, and automotive (See Appendix III for underlying calculations). Through the market study, and community surveys the community also proves to need forms of entertainment; bowling, movies, high-end restaurants (other than fast/casual). Although there are several shopping strips with the services in demand in close proximity, the West Park neighborhood has several barriers that residents do not typically cross to enter another retail market area; the Rocky River Reservation, I-90 to the north, and I-71 to the south.

With the substantial amount of spending power that the West Park neighborhood collectively has along with the market area demand for new retail, the neighborhood should be able to support new mixed retail and entertainment.

Category	Total No. Stores Needed
Retail/Food Services	
Restaurants (full-service)	9.26
Computer/Software Stores	6.48
Convenience/Gas Station	6.41
Automotive Parts/Accessories/Tires	6.22
Sewing, Fabric, and Craft Stores	5.35
Shoe Stores	5.23
Household Appliances	4.48
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	4.47
Books/periodicals, and music	4.45
Clothing Stores	4.12
Office Supplies/Stationary	3.82
Hobby, Toy, and Game Stores	3.82
Retail Bakeries	3.68
Restaurants (fast food)	3.63
Grocery Stores	3.23
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	3.21
Paint/Wallpaper	2.16
Other home furnishing stores	2.01
Building/Garden Material/Supplies	1.52
Jewelry Stores	1.39
Floor Covering Stores	1.34
Other miscellaneous retailers	0.82
Bars and Taverns	0.70
Used merchandise/antiques/vintag	0.68
Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters	0.66
Sporting Goods and Bicycles	0.55
Furniture Stores	0.47
Specialty Food Services	0.07
Florists	-0.17

Figure 68. Retail Niche Analysis Results (Viking Planning Group)

Highest & Best Use Analysis

Four separate sites in the study area were evaluated to determine their highest and best uses for revitalization/redevelopment.

Potential uses were evaluated to determine the most suitable use for the sites. Judgement criteria such as access, visibility, and infrastructure were ranked on a 5-point scale, with -2 being the least favorable assigned value and +2 being the greatest favorable assigned value. Scores were summed for each use to determine the highest and best use for each site.

Kmart Building

A highest & best use analysis was performed for the vacant former Kmart building. This analysis produced the following results:

Use	Total Score
General Retail	15
Grocery	15
Industrial	15
Office	12
Bar/Restaurant	9
Multi-Family Residential	8
Hotel	8
Surface Parking	2

Figure 69. Kmart Building Highest & Best Use (Viking Planning Group)

This analysis considered strictly the building without regard to building new structures on the parking lot in front of Kmart. Due primarily to the building's location in a high-traffic area, compatibility of the existing structure, general retail and grocery scored high. Industrial also scored high based on the possibility to convert big box stores into light industrial discussed earlier. While a conversion would have added costs,

the industrial market is stronger than the retail market, which made these uses tied in score.

Due to the building's age and condition, it is also possible that the building will be demolished entirely. The entire Kmart site, including a demolished building and empty parking lot, is evaluated below.

Kmart Site

The highest & best use analysis for the Kmart site as a whole produced the following results:

Use	Total Score
General Retail	13
Grocery	13
Office	13
Industrial	10
Multi-Family Residential	9
Hotel	9
Bar/Restaurant	8
Surface Parking	3

Figure 70. Kmart Site Highest & Best Use (Viking Planning Group)

Removal of the building at the site changes the equation slightly. The site is still highly viable for retail and grocery based on its visibility and traffic counts. Because it fronts a major intersection and is not zoned for industrial, an industrial use dropped slightly in the list, passed by office.

New development at the site could front Lorain Ave., instead of being set back, creating a better street wall and walkable atmosphere at the intersection.

Land and Buildings South and East of Kmart

To the east of the vacant Kmart building stands another aging strip retail building and the vacant Ohio Pipe site. South of these buildings to the railroad tracks are various vacant land and a vacant industrial building. There is also a strip of land south of Kmart, currently home to a VFW hall. South of the

VFW hall are several active light industrial businesses along W. 150th. Due to high amounts of vacancy, this area was evaluated, with highest and best uses shown below:

Use	Total Score
Industrial	18
Office	13
Multi-Family Residential	10
General Retail	10
Grocery	10
Hotel	9
Bar/Restaurant	5
Surface Parking	2

Figure 71. Land and Buildings South and East of Kmart Highest & Best Use (Viking Planning Group)

Scores were mostly similar to evaluation of the Kmart site; however, the lesser visibility of the land to the south and east of Kmart took points off of the retail score. Compatibility of structures and of zoning added to the scores of Industrial. The area could be suited for an industrial park, using both new construction and renovation of existing industrial structures.

RTA Parking Lot Site

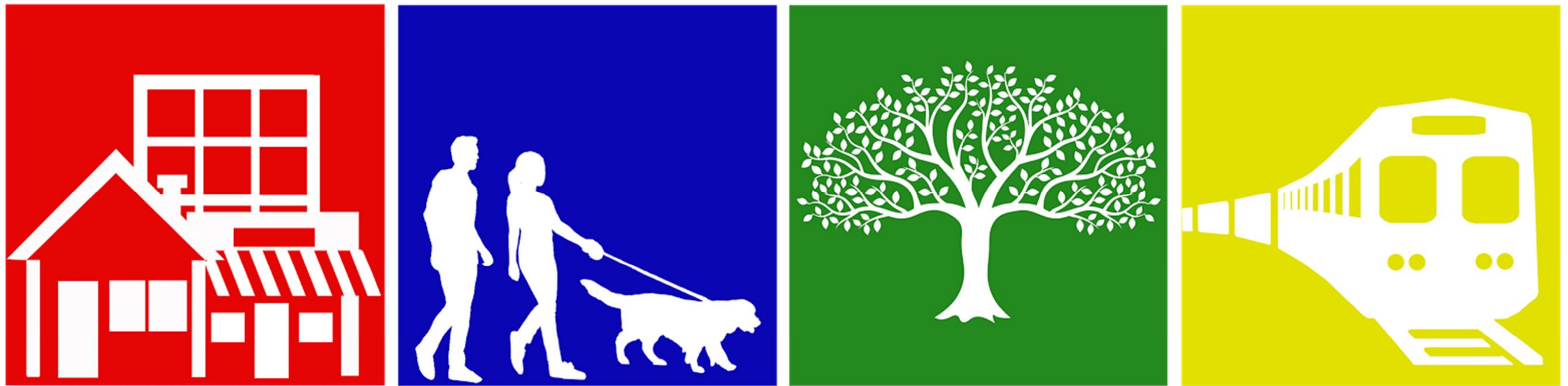
The vast parking lot of the West Park station of the RTA's Red Line could be underutilized and ripe for redevelopment. The site was evaluated and scores are as follows:

Use	Total Score
Office	22
Multi-Family Residential	21
Industrial	16
Hotel	13
Surface Parking	10
Grocery	9
General Retail	8
Bar/Restaurant	5

Figure 72. RTA Parking Lot Highest & Best Use

(Viking Planning Group)

Because the area is well served by transit, office and dense residential uses scored highest. The area could be well served by mixed-use, transit oriented development consisting of residential and light retail use. Office is theoretically a strong use, however, as mentioned in the market analysis earlier, West Park does not have a strong history of office development.



Community Engagement

Overview and Methodology

In order to assess and inform redevelopment efforts in West Park, Viking Planning Group (VP) conducted multi-level surveying to capture the needs, wants, and opinions of stakeholders. VP undertook an in-person, transit-specific survey and an in-person and online general patron survey to gauge the intricacies of the neighborhood. Additionally, key stakeholders were identified at the beginning of the planning process and formal interviews were conducted with willing participants. The survey and interview processes spanned a month-long period, after which VP was equipped with an abundance of quantitative and qualitative information that was then used to synthesize site-specific redevelopment proposals.

Because of the multitude of issues to explore for the study, and as well as transit's unique role in the neighborhood, VP developed two separate surveys: 1) a transit survey to assess the characteristics of transit ridership, use, and riders' experience of the West Park RTA Station; and 2) a patron survey as a more general means to inform the VP team's assessment of strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses of the broader West Park neighborhood. The two surveys and stakeholder interview questions were developed in a collaborative setting that gave VP the opportunity for highly detailed response analysis. The results provided a depth and breadth of insight and potential solutions that would have been difficult to gauge otherwise. In total, VP collected 113 transit surveys, 2,053 patron surveys, and 23 stakeholder interviews.

All surveying was conducted anonymously to ensure both privacy and the integrity of those involved. Questions for both the surveys and stakeholder interviews were approved by Cleveland State University's Internal Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects in Research prior to engaging the community. Similarly, each surveyor of the Viking Planning Group team was given a unique identification number to further establish confidentiality and legitimacy in the survey and interview process. As per IRB, state, and federal regulations, all

stakeholders and survey respondents were provided consent forms, informational handouts, and instructions for requesting further information about the study or to communicate any concerns.

All Survey and stakeholder interviewees were at least 18 years or older. Survey respondents and interview participants were not required to answer all the questions presented or terminate the survey or interview at any point in the process.

Patron and Transit-Specific Surveys

All surveys were conducted during March and April 2019 at various times throughout the week. Individual VP surveyors input in-person survey responses into Qualtrics using their unique identification number.

The patron survey contained 23 questions regarding general demographic information of survey takers and past, present, and future outcomes of the West Park neighborhood and the three sub-sites within the study area: the Kmart site, Lorain Ave., and the West Park RTA Station Area. This survey sought to assess people's relationships to and engagement with West Park. Specific questions ranged from, "What is your connection to the West Park neighborhood," to "What specific amenities do you feel are missing from West Park" (see Appendix I). The patron survey was conducted in-person by team members at the West Park branch of the Cleveland Public Library located at 3805 W. 157th St. A web link to an online version of the survey was also distributed via email by KCDC staff to their e-newsletter recipients. Additionally, the owner of 5 Points Café, himself a KCDC board member, distributed the survey web link to the café's e-news recipients. The online survey link directed participants to a dedicated Qualtrics page, where they were able to take the same survey as administered in-person and have their responses immediately recorded for future analysis.

The transit survey consisted of 21 questions which also looked at the demographic information of survey takers, trip details such as mode of travel to the station, destination, and

frequency of use, and finally the usefulness, safety and comfort of the station itself. These surveys were only collected in-person at the West Park RTA station transfer waiting area, located off Lorain Avenue. For reasons of safety, surveys were not conducted on the Rapid platform. Specific questions ranged from, "How did you get to the Rapid Station today?" to "What are two things you would like to do at the West Park RTA station that you can't do now" (see Appendix I).

Stakeholder Interviews

The stakeholder interview process began earlier, as a specific list of candidates was first identified by KCDC staff and then expanded upon by team members and faculty advisors. The total number of people willing and able to be formally interviewed by study team members was 23.

The process for engaging these stakeholders involved an initial outreach period via phone and/or email. Once a stakeholder agreed to be interviewed and interview dates were secured, each team member was then responsible for meeting with their determined interviewee. Interviews averaged about 45 minutes each and followed a predetermined and IRB-approved list of questions. Questions were categorized in regard to 'general or introductory', 'wanted and unwanted uses', 'real estate and financing', and 'recommendations'.

Interviews and responses were recorded either by hand, by audio recording, or by some mix of both. Once an interview was complete, team members wrote up the responses using their unique identification code and made results available to the whole planning team for analysis.

Equity Considerations

In order to ensure equity in this project study we took several steps to get input from all members of the West Park community. This includes not only residents, but members of the business community, transient workers, and visitors to the community. Several teams have reached out to the community by conducting surveys targeted for each group listed above and

reached out for detailed interviews with community stakeholders.

Immigrant Populations

West Park is home to many immigrant and resettled refugee populations.⁴⁹ The Hope Center is a key resource for residents and special care to communicate with, hear from, and interview representatives who work for the Hope Center allowed the Viking Planning Group to include the voice of the neighborhood's minority population in the study plan. While direct immigrant and refugee interviews were not scheduled, online versions of the survey were distributed to stakeholders with connections to the population. The Viking Planning Group did not have access to translational services for the study plan, so further investigation into the needs of this population should be considered in the next stages of redevelopment, using interviews and surveys in the native languages of residents.

Equity for Aging Residents

The West Park neighborhood has been a strongly knit community for generations. This has created a rich community of elderly residents that are interested in staying in the neighborhood that they love.⁵⁰ There is currently only one retirement home in the neighborhood and indications that the current landscape is not meeting the housing needs of residents. Through stakeholder interviews, surveys, and housing market analyses, the study plan makes special considerations for the aging population, ensuring residents' ability and options to live in the community that they have called home for years to come.

The Business Community

West Park has been hit by the growing changes in the retail industry. A prime exhibit is the Kmart site at the intersection of W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave., where the big box vacancy has left a void in the center point of the neighborhood. Further along Lorain Ave., years of business abandonment have left the corridor speckled with holes. The study took the local business community's concerns about the future of Lorain Ave. and developed multiple ideas and implementation strategies to foster incremental improvements that may bring new life into the West Park neighborhood.

Transient Workers and Visitors

West Park is one of Cleveland's solid neighborhoods, providing steady housing, employment opportunities, and access to outdoor activities through the nearby Cleveland Metroparks. The RTA Redline Rapid Station remains a key transportation option for individuals in the neighborhood, but also for visitors. The current location for this station has left a lot to be desired, in terms of location and current site and station configurations. The study plan took this into consideration and has made recommendations that would make the rapid station more inviting to the travelers.

Conclusion

The West Park is a neighborhood that is imbued with a variety of the groups from all walks of life. Each of those groups has needs that a study plan is bound to take into consideration. The West Park study plan has taken measures to include ideas and plans to address those needs to provide for an equitable future for the West Park community.

Survey Results

Demographics

In general, survey respondents lived in Cleveland proper, with zip codes reported from different neighborhoods within the city (see Figure 73). Furthermore, a large majority of survey participants expressed a deep connection to the West Park neighborhood: 70% of respondents were from the area and have either lived there for a substantial period of time or have childhood or familial roots in the area.

Appendix I has a detailed breakdown of all demographic-related responses.

Patron Survey Demographics

The demographic make-up of patron survey respondents is strikingly comparable to West Park's demographics overall: the majority of respondents who chose to answer specific demographic-related questions were white (83%) and lived in a single-family home (86%). The one break with this pattern was that nearly 70% of respondents self-identified as female.

The majority of patron survey respondents reported home zip codes in the West Park Statistical Planning Area (SPA) and the immediate surrounding areas of West Park. Outside of this geography, other patron survey respondents resided in surrounding cities, mostly on the west side, within Cuyahoga County (see Figure 73).

⁴⁹ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "B02001: Race." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

⁵⁰ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "S0101: Age and Sex." 2017 (5-year average) American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2017. Web. 1 February 2019. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

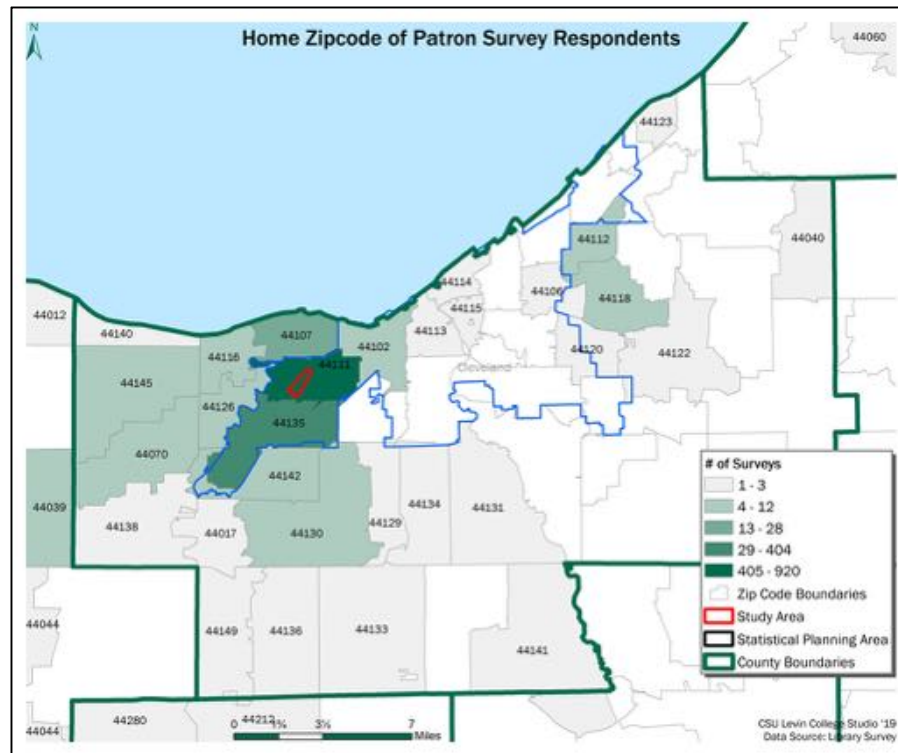


Figure 73. Home Zip Code of Patron Survey Respondents
(Viking Planning Group)

The income distribution of participants who chose to respond was more pronounced in higher-income brackets, with nearly one third of respondents (31%) having a household income of over \$100,000. The range of incomes for patron survey participants can be seen in Figure 74.

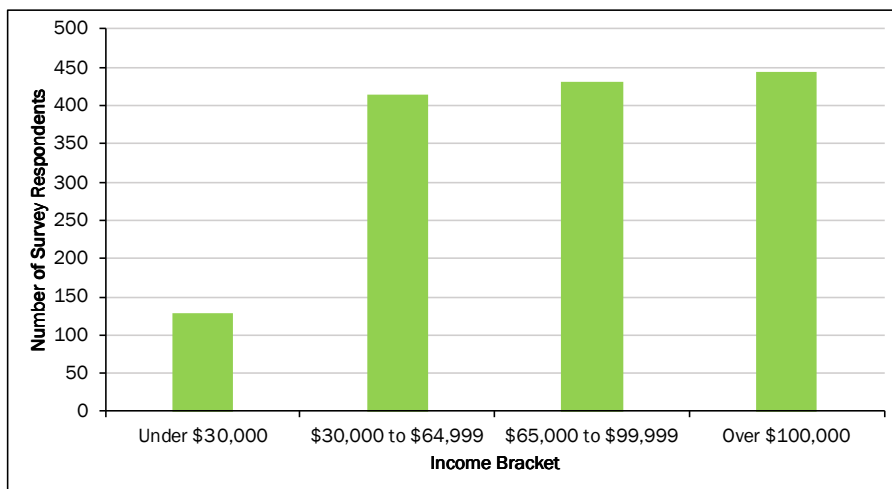


Figure 74. Household Income Ranges of Patron Survey Respondent (Viking Planning Group)

Transit Survey Demographics

Transit survey respondents were less diverse in their place of residence than were patron survey respondents. The survey population was more heavily concentrated within the city boundary, with no persons participating from outside Cuyahoga County. This is most likely a reflection of RTA’s Rapid and bus routes being largely limited to the county proper. See Figure 75.

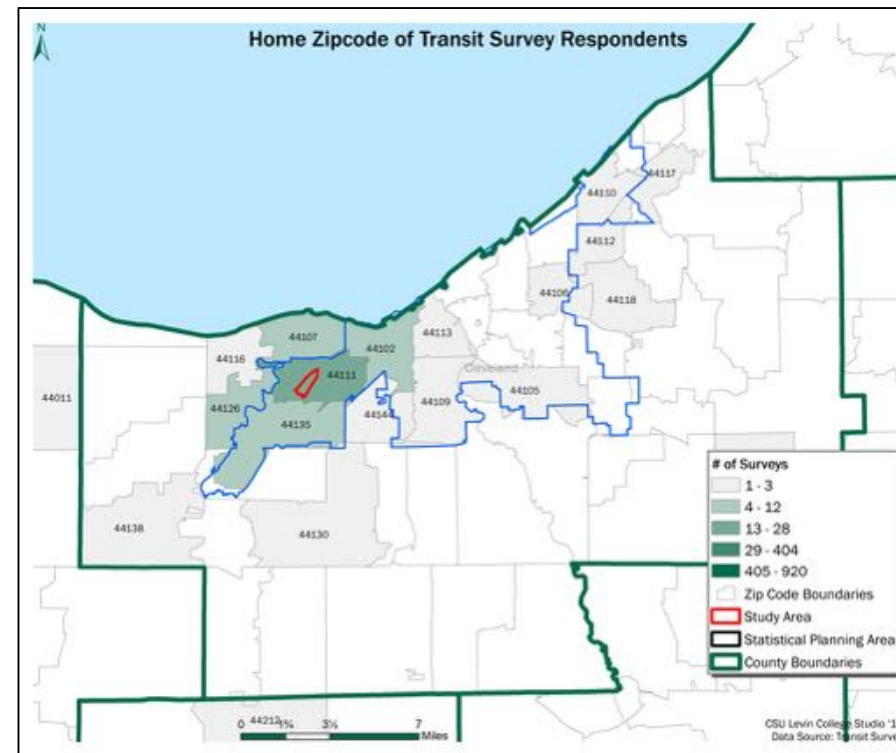


Figure 75. Home Zip Code of Transit Survey Respondents
(Viking Planning Group)

Personal affiliation with the West Park neighborhood was less pronounced by transit survey respondents than by those of the patron survey; however, neighborhood ties still ran deep. Because the West Park RTA Station in particular functions as a regional transit hub, with five bus lines and the Red Line rapid converging, it makes sense that there were fewer participants with a direct association to the neighborhood than were by patron survey respondents.

The mix of transit-survey respondents exhibited greater diversity than that of the patron survey and the broader neighborhood, with roughly 42% of respondents self-identifying as Black or African American and roughly 41% of respondents self-identifying as White. As census tracts surrounding the station have higher percentages of People of Color to the North and East (about 27-40%) and more than double that to the southeast (about 85-92%) it again stands to reason that respondents at this regional hub would be more diverse. Only a handful of transit survey respondents self-identified as Asian (2%), American Indian or Alaska Native (3%), or Latino (5%).

More men than women participated in the transit survey (66% and 30% respectively), a striking difference. One possible explanation, discussed in more detail below, is that *potential* female riders avoid using this station and/or RTA altogether because it feels neither safe nor comfortable. Given the relatively small sample size of 113 respondents, it must also be acknowledged that surveyor bias may have played a role here (though there is no specific indication that there was) and/or that perhaps fewer females at the station agreed to be surveyed than did males. A more in-depth station user analysis would need to be conducted to more clearly determine these possibilities.

Preferences

In general, the results of the both the patron and transit-specific survey indicated a need for improved amenities throughout the neighborhood and for a more diverse mix of opportunities for users and residents. Specifically, respondents would like to see improved connectivity and the opportunity for a more active, walkable neighborhood.

Patron Survey Preferences

Similar to previous studies’ findings, respondents revealed an interest in shifting the auto-centric land use and transportation patterns most prevalent in West Park to a more walkable, “livable” urban village model. It is clear at the same time,

however, that residents value the neighborhood's history, heritage, and overall sense of community very highly and do not want to see changes in West Park that might threaten or diminish those elements.

Respondents see much room for improvement to the neighborhood, however, and expressed a desire for a range of both public and private investments to round out and enhance what is already a great place to live. These ideas and desires have been analyzed for content and frequency and are summarized below. In turn, the findings greatly informed our subsequent recommendations for physical, economic and social changes to the neighborhood.

Moving forward, VP encourages the planners, CDCs, elected officials, property owners, and other parties of power and influence to continue to engage and empower a representative range of residents and neighbors, both long-time and new, in envisioning and bringing to fruition positive change for the neighborhood. A deliberately inclusive process that welcomes and engages residents regardless of racial, ethnic or cultural background, financial status, age, gender-identity, means of travel, and customs will result in a stronger, safer, more socially cohesive neighborhood of comfort and opportunity. .

Desired Amenities

A quick read of the survey results gives the impression that virtually everything desirable is “missing” from the neighborhood – that there are little to no retail outlets available, whether supermarkets, department stores, independently-owned (non-chain) family-friendly restaurants, or smaller boutique-style retail shops. While these do indeed exist in the neighborhood, the results strongly suggest that residents would like a much higher concentration of them all. The same goes for parks and greenspace, recreational opportunities, a denser tree canopy and overall greener landscape. Simply put, the quality of life amenities that facilitate health, wealth and well-being are desired, with a focus on providing such spaces and opportunities for youth, families

with young children, and the growing population of older adults.

Getting Around West Park

A large majority (roughly 80%) of survey respondents reported driving as their primary mode of travel within the neighborhood. This is a reflection, to some degree, of the neighborhood's layout, land use patterns, and available infrastructure. While West Park's sidewalk network is built-out for easy circulation, the walking environment in many areas is so dominated by cars and destinations so spread out, that only about 7% of respondents said they walked “mostly” or “always”. Respondents seem to desire to walk more, however, with over 45% reporting that they walk “sometimes”. This meshes with the strong desire for an improved pedestrian environment, whether for shopping or errands, to school or to work, or simply out of health-consciousness and a desire for exercise and enjoyment. While the Kamm's Corner area does provide more of this type of experience, with its concentrated mix of retail, restaurants and neighborhood events, people would like to extend that experience to other parts of West Park.

Despite the wealth of transit options in the neighborhood, public transportation use is severely lacking among survey respondents, from 2% for bus usage to 5% for Rapid usage.

Where People Go in West Park

The places in the neighborhood that respondents visit most frequently – at least on a weekly basis – are the grocery store, bars and restaurants and banks/ATMs. (See Figure 76). The next tier of destinations were neighborhood retail, cafes and coffee shops, houses of worship, and public parks. The places in the neighborhood that most respondents said they rarely or never visited include auto-related businesses, healthcare facilities, the West Park YMCA, and the West Park Rapid Station.

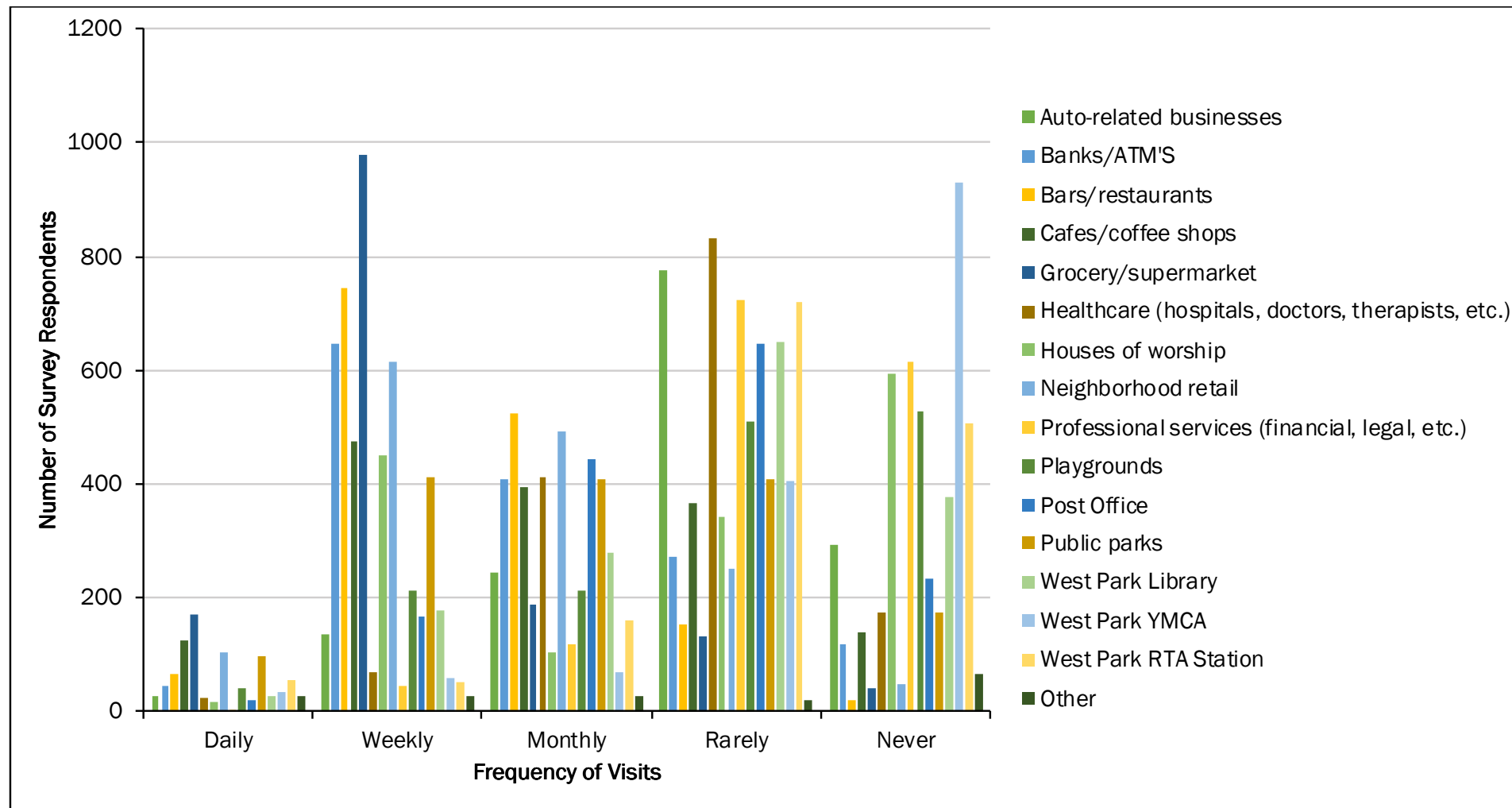


Figure 76. Frequency of Visits to Select Neighborhood Destinations (Viking Planning Group)

Additional Housing Types

In response to the question, “What types of housing would you like to see more of in West Park?” 38% of participants showed a preference for the single-family homes that already dominate the community. Interestingly, nearly a third (30%) of respondents showed an openness to new townhouses in the neighborhood – of which there are currently few – though much less so for new apartments (only 12%) or additional duplexes (7%). In open-ended comments, some stakeholders expressed that there should be appropriate housing options for

a more diverse crowd of single young professionals as well as for seniors

Redevelopment Ideas & Changes for Kmart Site

While big box retail (essentially the most recent use) was the top choice among respondents in terms of what they would like to see at the Kmart site, there also seems to be a strong desire for a fully redeveloped site, with newly designed buildings to compliment modern lifestyles. Additional top choices for the site included a community center and family-oriented entertainment options, e.g. bowling, a movie theater, etc.

Redevelopment Ideas for West Park RTA Station Area

One of the most frequent desires expressed by respondents for any potential redevelopment of the RTA station area was for more public parks and greenspaces. Another frequently expressed desire was for greater safety and security at and around the station. Lastly, survey respondents expressed the need for improved connectivity to the station, as the station is seen to be quite isolated.

Most Liked Aspects of West Park

Survey respondents agreed that the strong sense of community is one of the most revered parts of the West Park neighborhood. Respondents also felt that the affordability of the neighborhood, accessibility and point of connection to nearby amenities (airport, downtown Cleveland, Lorain Ave), and the number of restaurant and bar options were also consistently noted as strengths of West Park.

Least Liked Aspects of West Park

Survey respondents had a particular perception of crime that further analysis of the data could not corroborate, however, this response consistently came up as one of the biggest threats to the neighborhood. Other respondents noted that racism, declining properties (vacancies along Lorain Ave), lack of diversity in available amenities, and the feeling of the neighborhood having “untapped potential” were other characteristics respondents liked least.

Transit Survey Preferences

The general travel habits of transit users indicate that the West Park station serves as an important and critical multi-modal transit hub. Nearly 75% of respondents reported using the bus or Rapid to get to this station on the day of being surveyed. Similarly, transit users rely on transit for everyday life, rather than just commuting.

Travel Habits

Only about 10% of participants arrived via automobile, whether they drove themselves (6%), car-pooled (3%) or ride-shared (1%), reiterating the general lack of demand for parking at this station. Significantly, nearly 17% of respondents walked to the station, highlighting the need for safe and easy pedestrian access.

While nearly 40% of respondents were on their “way home” when surveyed (reflecting the varied times of day during which the survey was administered), only about 25% reported being on their way to work. Strikingly, over 32% of respondents reported being headed somewhere other than home or work, whether visiting family or friends (6%), shopping and errands (18%), school (4%) or elsewhere (8%), revealing the extent to which riders at this station relied on transit for everyday life, rather than just for commuting. Further supporting this notion were the vast majority (87.5%) of respondents who reported using the station daily (56.25%) or weekly (31.25%). Only one respondent had never used the station before.

When asked why they ride the bus and/or Rapid, respondents reported that they did so for a variety of reasons, whether affordability (23%), convenience (36%) or “no other choice/don’t own a car” (29%). While there were no major differences in why people rode transit among genders, racial and ethnic identities, and household incomes, respondents younger than 55 choose “convenient” 59% of the time compared to 39% of respondents 55 and older.

Access, Safety, Comfort, and Amenities

A clear majority of users felt either “strongly positive” (20%) or “somewhat positive” (40%) about the station as a whole. About one-quarter of respondents felt neutral about the station and only 13% felt either “strongly negative” or “somewhat negative” about it. There were no major differences of response among age groups, gender, or racial and ethnic identities.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents felt either “very safe” or “somewhat safe” at the station at that moment. Nearly 20% felt neutral and just under 10% felt either “very unsafe” or “somewhat unsafe”. Strikingly, however, nearly one-fifth (19%) of female respondents did not feel safe, whereas only 3% of males did not feel safe. Furthermore, when asked what would make the station safer, 39 individuals specifically noted more regular “police” or “security” presence, particularly during the evening and at night; nine (9) suggested better lighting, security cameras, and/or an emergency call box; and another five (5) mentioned a desire for fewer “shady” people or “loiterers” at the station.

Similarly, while a large majority (72%) of respondents said they were either “very comfortable” or “somewhat comfortable” at the station at that moment, only 50% of female respondents reported feeling so compared to 80% of males. Additionally, ten (10) people suggested improved seating; six (6) suggested adding public bathrooms; and another eight (8) once again suggested greater police presence as means to improve station area comfort. Questions on what additional things people would like to do or see at the station elicited another 54 requests for public restrooms, which represents nearly half of the survey respondents.

Additional suggestions for improvements that occurred with high frequency (at least 10 mentions each) included: 1) a coffee shop, snack bar or restaurant; and/or 2) snack and soda vending machines. Lower frequency suggestions (at least 5 mentions each) included: 1) phone charging stations (and/or more outlets); 2) improved schedule information, such as a real-time arrival board; 3) WiFi service and/or TVs to watch; and 4) a water fountain. [Four (4) people also specifically mentioned that there was a soda machine, but that it was routinely broken and should be repaired.]

Stakeholder Interview Results

Much like the patron and transit surveys, the outcome of the stakeholder interview process was both informative and

comprehensive. Twenty-three persons were interviewed, which provided the VP group a wide range of ideas and perspectives on the redevelopment processes. The breakout of those engaged stakeholders is displayed in Figure 77.

Specifically, the general fields of those stakeholders were identified as: public agencies, environmental specialists, non-profit organizations, real estate professionals including developers and property owners, community members, business owners, and religious organizations.

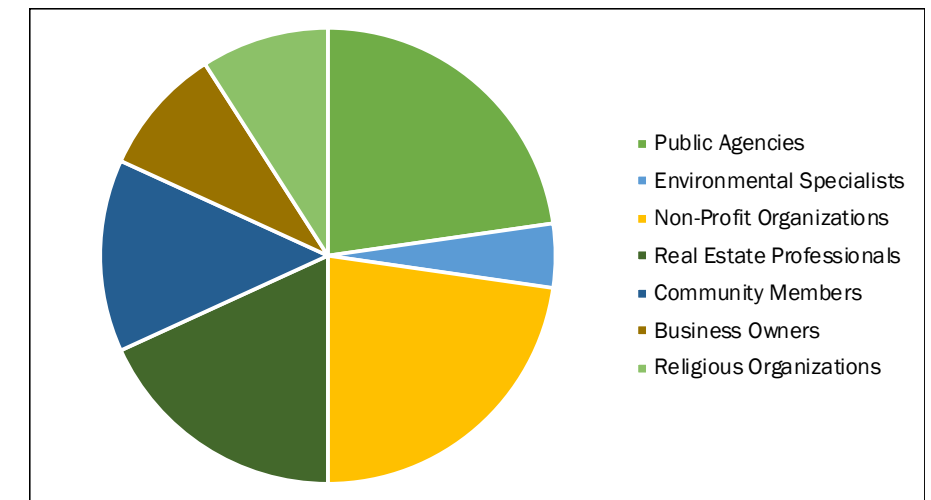


Figure 77. Breakout of Stakeholder Interview Respondents by Field (Viking Planning Group)

In order to organize and synthesize the various opinions and viewpoints stakeholder interview questions were developed to fit four categories that focused on comprehensive questions that would elicit informative and meaningful responses from each interviewee. These questions encompassed the various aspects of the redevelopment project potential including:

- wanted and unwanted uses,
- real estate & finance, and
- recommendations.

The responses varied based on interviewee knowledge of the neighborhood and awareness of the sites, however, there was a general consensus that there was an absolute need for new and updated redevelopment for the three designated sites (the Lorain Ave Corridor, the former Kmart site on the corner of

Lorain Ave and W. 150th St., and the West Park Transit Station).

Wanted and Unwanted Uses

The overwhelming majority of stakeholders interviewed felt that the current strengths were West Park's proximity to a variety of places (downtown Cleveland, Fairview Hospital, Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, the Metroparks, various churches, schools, and retail) and its convenient location to public transit access. It was also noted that the housing stock in the neighborhood was well-regarded in its stability and affordability. Stakeholders also commented on the strong sense of community that characterizes the neighborhood.

When asked about the present challenges of the neighborhood, most stakeholder interviewees discussed specific buildings and conditions along Lorain Ave. Specifically, interviewees mentioned structural challenges, vacancies of commercial properties, and not enough diversity in amenities (e.g. too many bars and used car lots). Despite having strong access to transit with the West Park station, interviewees agreed that the station itself is isolated and that the neighborhood is heavily auto-centric and not particularly pedestrian friendly.

Real Estate and Finance

As previously mentioned, the neighborhood has a long history of stable housing stock for first-time home-buyers who have become lifelong residents. As these residents begin to age, access to affordable and age-appropriate housing has become a challenge that most community members would like to be addressed. Another opportunity that was mentioned by stakeholders was to create more green space and neighborhood attractions to increase the traffic into the neighborhood. Most of the stakeholders have a deep-rooted relationship with the community and its tight-knit feel. For this reason, they would like to have more access to activities in the neighborhood instead of having to frequent nearby areas like

Lakewood, Ohio City and Tremont for dining and entertainment.

Most stakeholders recognized the West Park Rapid Station as a major hurdle in the study area. The rapid station was overwhelmingly mentioned because it is not as rider- or pedestrian-friendly, nor as safe-feeling as other nearby stations. There is an overall consensus that the station sits too far back from Lorain Ave., which makes entering the station non-desirable for many transit riders. Another significant mention from stakeholders was the fact that West Park is a Middle Neighborhood, which means that, though relatively stable, it has still experienced decline in recent years, at least partially due to a lack of available funding from governments and the private sector.

In terms of potential funding opportunities and mechanisms to be utilized in redevelopment, stakeholders acknowledged that the neighborhood is in a vulnerable position due to neglect from policymakers and resource providers.

Available resources have diminished because city government and private entities have refocused their efforts and funds in more distressed neighborhoods. With West Park being a middle neighborhood, assistance proves difficult. Therefore, houses have become outdated and the markets for these homes have declined due to the slow destabilization of these neighborhoods. Many of the stakeholders interviewed made note of this issue but still had suggestions as to what unique sources of funding might be available for redevelopment projects. Out of the 23 responses, the most applicable involved transit-oriented development tax credits for potential development at the Rapid station.

Interviewees were enthusiastic about mixed-use development and affordable housing trends that would help invigorate the neighborhood and have the potential for financing. By incorporating mixed-use development, stakeholders also believed this could attract a younger demographic and help to spur local economic growth.

Recommendations

In general, interviewees would like to see more diversity in the amenities provided to the neighborhood to accommodate a variety of persons (community gathering space, green space, senior housing, recreation activities for children, vibrancy, and a placemaking to enhance the sense of identity and community the neighborhood is known for). In order to redevelop the neighborhood, stakeholders were also insistent that there be less out-of-town landlords operating the buildings in the area.

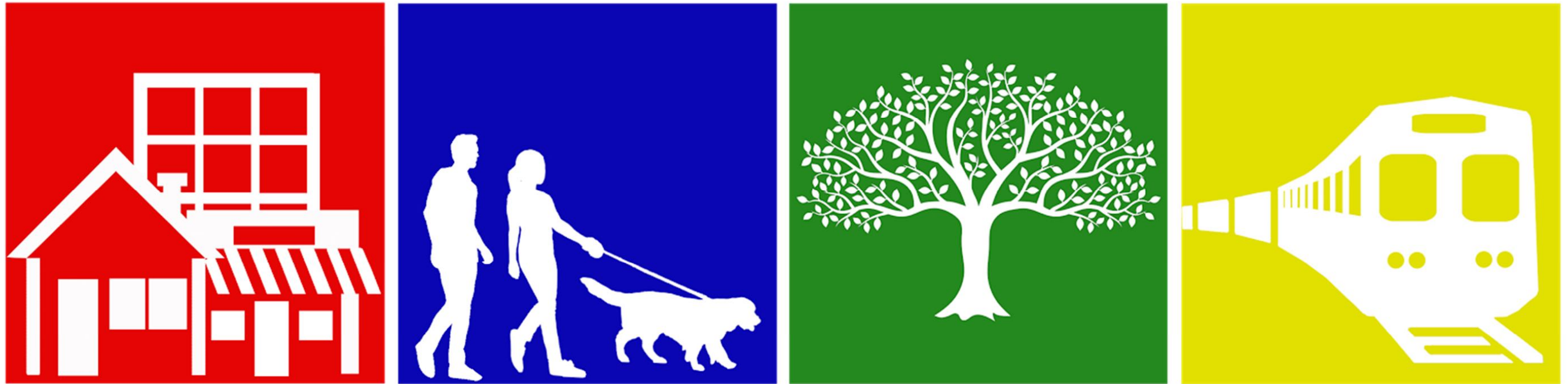
Stakeholders would like to see the City of Cleveland have a stronger presence in the neighborhood by holding city-sponsored events to help bring more attention and focus to the area. This will help establish a deeper neighborhood identity that redevelopment and growth rely on.

Specific development recommendations were as follows:

- Mixed-use redevelopment
- Extension of the Redline Greenway leading to/from the West Park Rapid Station
- Investments in landscaping and pedestrian improvements along Lorain Ave.
- Food incubators
- Moving the West Park Rapid Station to increase walkability and rideability
- General focus on redevelopment of the West Park RTA Station

Conclusion

The final analysis of both surveys and stakeholder interviews indicate that the West Park neighborhood welcomes an opportunity for appropriate, community-centered redevelopment. The data and responses collected helped to inform the development recommendations for the study area that are discussed in-depth.



Conceptual Frameworks

History of Middle Neighborhoods

America's Middle Neighborhoods: Setting the Stage for Revival⁵¹

In present-day America, major inner-cities are looked at in two very different extremes. Either glamorous downtown/uptown areas or desperate, forgotten neighborhoods. What about neighborhoods where people of all backgrounds work, play, raise a family, and call home? These places are called middle neighborhoods as they serve in between stronger markets and weaker market areas. The Center for Community Progress out of Washington, D.C. has a mission of developing vacant spaces into vibrant places. This process is ongoing in many major U.S. inner cities. This literature review will detail what makes a good middle neighborhood.

There are many classifications that go into a middle neighborhood since every city and its neighborhoods have their own identity. One particular description reveals that “middle neighborhoods typically contain 25% to 40% of these cities’ populations. Their ability to remain vital affects the social fabric of their cities, while their ability to sustain stable property values affects their cities’ economic and fiscal health. Deterioration, middle-class flight, and declining house values in these areas in recent decades have undermined the vitality of dozens of cities and undone much of the economic benefit of the revitalization taking place elsewhere in the same cities.”⁵¹

This within a quarter to nearly half of a city’s population total. The sense of the traditional American Dream can be found in a middle neighborhood as families looking to build their base for the long-term and seek the best opportunities in education, housing and financial stability.

Some cities have had unbelievable hardships, but within a middle neighborhood, the resources and support are what

build that individual and/or family’s character. Middle neighborhoods got started with “the rise of America’s industrial cities during the hundred years beginning in the middle of the 19th century paralleled the rise of the nation’s middle class and industrial working class. The transformation of the United States into the world’s leading industrial power was accompanied by steady growth not only in the number of industrial workers, but in the number of clerks, small business owners, salespeople, transit workers, and all those whose work was needed to sustain the nation’s growing economy and increasingly complex urban society.”⁵¹

These middle neighborhoods developed businesses where residents can get their needs without going into a downtown for every possible need. This put neighborhood banks, grocery stores, parks, libraries and other essential needs into direct areas for its residents to cherish. “Much of the city’s commercial activities took place along each neighborhood’s arterial streets, while workplaces were dispersed throughout the city. Many neighborhoods grew up around factories where their residents worked, while in others, the workplace was only a streetcar ride away.”⁵¹

The development of public transportation in the form of streetcar, then gradually into busses and transit rail helped move the daily flow of people’s desires of going to work, school, shopping and every productive need.

How does the middle neighborhood qualify in today’s America? There are three criteria standards that tell what a middle neighborhood is in relation to income:

1. Median income between 80% and 120% of the citywide median
2. Median income above the citywide median, but below the countywide median; and

3. Median income between 75% and 125% of the national median (between \$41,492 and \$69,152) in 2016.

The more median income a neighborhood has, the strength of the tax base and revenues help the area for current and long-term purposes like city services and beautification of the direct areas.

“Middle neighborhoods are the places that fall between these two extremes.”⁵¹ This scenario holds true in many cities and Cleveland is a good example of having middle neighborhoods, including West Park. Once a streetcar suburb that lead to many others, then annexed into the City of Cleveland in 1923, West Park has served in a role of a middle neighborhood with families desiring the American Dream and appreciating the finest settings in everyday life.

West Park with its close proximity to Downtown Cleveland and Hopkins International Airport does help with the role of interaction with people from diverse backgrounds. The connection of the proximity with the RTA Red Line Rapid Transit Rail or Interstates 90 and 71, the interaction of Cleveland and beyond take place in the middle neighborhood of West Park. “Vital middle neighborhoods can remain not only places of opportunity for upwardly mobile urban families and immigrants but may be able to accommodate a share of the nation’s population growth over the coming decades in ways that are likely to be not only more cost-effective but more environmentally sustainable than new development and the continued outward expansion of metropolitan areas.”⁵¹

Why need to expand into other places to cause constant urban sprawl when you have existing resources and a strong community within the city. From within the basic statements within Mallach’s article, Cleveland’s West Park neighborhood is a great definition of what an American inner-city middle neighborhood is to the eyes of a person who wants to

⁵¹ Mallach, Allan. America’s Middle Neighborhoods: Setting the Stage for Revival. Center for Community Progress, Vacant Spaces into Vibrant Places. Washington, D.C. November, 2018. <https://www.communityprogress.net>

understand the fabric of the American Dream in today's society.

Local Public Policy and Middle Neighborhoods⁵²

Middle neighborhoods in inner-cities are seen as blessings but have their peaks and valleys with fortune and misfortunes. There is no such thing as a perfect middle neighborhood, but there is always room for improvement. There are more detailed descriptions of a middle neighborhood pending what city you are in, but the sense of community is always there. This next literature review from Henry Webber of the Brown School of Social Work and Washington University in St. Louis helps paint the picture of a middle neighborhood.

In the last literature review, general descriptions were given, but Webber describes the middle neighborhood different categories. He classifies these neighborhoods into three categories: stable, descending, or ascending.⁵² “Stable middle neighborhoods have modest housing built for working- to middle-income residents. Descending middle neighborhoods are former upper-class neighborhoods that, through decline in demand, have become middle class despite excellent housing stock. Ascending middle neighborhoods were traditionally poor, but because of rapid increases in demand for urban living, have become popular with new residents, usually young adults.”⁵²

Some middle neighborhoods can have one category that best describe their community, while others can have two or even all three categories. How does West Park fall into Webber's categories of a middle neighborhood? In regard to stable, the housing stock is for working and middle income residents and applies to the West Park demographics. The stock is a moderate kind as there is a great variety of homes pending the preferences of a home-owning and/or renting resident. With descending, the middle class structure is strong in West Park

as people from many backgrounds seek the American of possessing a home. As for ascending, there is a rapid increase for urban living as new residents and upstart families have declared West Park as home. West Park in general has a strong community support in which it encourages its residents to embrace their fellow neighbors and businesses.

While West Park is a good example of a middle neighborhood with a great sense of awareness, Webber does tell about how the middle neighborhood has had its own detours along the way. “The decreasing number of middle-income neighborhoods in America has many causes. First is the change in the distribution of American income. As a nation, more of us are rich and more of us are poor, with fewer families in the middle. Changing employment patterns, particularly the loss of nearby manufacturing employment have reduced the demand for housing in many urban core neighborhoods, leading to urban decline...Many middle-income families, the backbone of most urban working-class neighborhoods, have reacted to the weakness of urban public school systems and the loss of parochial school choices by moving to the suburbs. Perhaps the least recognized cause of the decline in middle-income neighborhoods is the change in average household composition, from larger families to smaller households, many without children.”⁵²

The chain reaction of preferences in families have changed drastically in recent decades and urban decline has not been helpful. Families will go where the best opportunities are. With West Park, the community structure has remained stable as many families have stayed and new families with and without children have settled in as they enjoy the sense of place. “The shrinking number of middle neighborhoods in America is challenging for cities and a cause for deep concern. As neighborhoods become poorer, city revenue, which in America depends primarily on property taxes, has declined. As city revenue declines, the ability for cities to offer quality services

also decreases. If a city cannot attract and hold middle-class residents, it will not have the resources to help the poor.”⁵²

The sense from this set of quotes is without the middle neighborhoods in our inner-cities, then the benefits for residents will fall apart and the long-term picture will not be promising. Therefore, it is not only an exclusive neighborhood effort, but that of a citywide effort to make the communities and city prosper. West Park cannot do it all alone, but similar middle neighborhoods like Old Brooklyn and Collinwood enter in and help out the city as a whole. A good strategic plan for middle neighborhoods is vital in the sense that residents and business will invest into a community with effort and awareness. “For a middle neighborhood to prosper, it must induce new residents to move to a particular neighborhood.”⁵²

This strategic plan from Webber is one that a great team effort is needed along with a solid sense of awareness that resources, services, preferences will lead to long-term stability in happiness, safety and comfortability. “Middle neighborhoods are the lynchpin of the success of most American cities. They are also relatively ignored by academics and policymakers, who have focused on the problems of concentrated poverty, gentrification, and need for downtown revitalization.”⁵²

West Park has become a favorite in Cleveland with people since it defines a true sense of place to live, work, play and prosper in. Also, a welcoming feel is a strong boost to have people not just pass by, but to stay for a long time ahead.

⁵² Webber, Henry S. *Local Public Policy and Middle Neighborhoods*. Community Development Investment Review. Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. San Francisco, CA. August 23, 2016.

Oakland Gang Injunctions: Gentrification or Public Safety?⁵³

Middle neighborhoods have a welcoming feel to all that desire the best quality in life. There is a hurdle that is of a concern with regard to safety. Some residents want a sense of peace with their place. Rooms for improvement are always encouraging, but for those unable to adjust to new trends, the fear of gentrification is always on the mind. People have their own style of living as long as it is non-threatening and suitable for the public to interact. How does middle neighborhoods get into the battle of gentrification or public safety?

Eric Arnold looks at the battle of gentrification and public safety within a community of Oakland with gang problems, lower-income residents and senior citizens. Arnold describes a situation in an Oakland neighborhood, “North Oakland’s emergence as a developing biotech corridor and the “spillover effect” of young urbanites priced out of the San Francisco housing market populating Fruitvale. Gang injunctions are “something that developers wanted” to change the demographics of those neighborhoods, he says. If so, it would not be the first such case.”⁵³

The fear of a project being cancelled due to plight and safety concerns can make for a tense situation. “Displacement of poor and working black and Latino families from their home communities,” and a development strategy identified as “privileged adjacency,” or “a pattern of using gang injunctions to benefit nearby affluent areas.”⁵³

The residents who are law-abiding and care for the community, but unable to afford the higher prices of housing and necessities will be squeezed out and have to relocate. The issues of equity and fairness come into play since if a community is going to present itself as an ideal middle

neighborhood, then the issues need to be resolved in a timely manner. “Even before gang injunctions and the foreclosure crisis, gentrification was already underway in Fruitvale...Longtime residents fear that the region will turn into an East Bay version of San Francisco’s hipster-ish Mission district—which, incidentally, experiences frequent gang violence despite existing injunctions.”⁵³

This can have an impact on residents who are of low-income and/or senior citizen status since there would be a fear that they would not be seen as a priority as compared to desired groups. One quote from an attorney in Arnold’s study states: “Instead of a “top-down” approach, which reinforces the popular perception of crime in Oakland but fails to address its root causes, let’s invest in our communities.”⁵³

The approach of going all in with a big project instead of looking at the surrounding community first with needs and improvements, but the same problems could still exist and cause more problems throughout the community whether in a popular gathering spot and/or a neighborhood block.

The Main Street Initiative in the Barrio: Commercial Revitalization in the Fruitvale District, Oakland, California⁵⁴

In 1997, Mario Turner-Lloveras from University of California, Berkeley presented a paper to MIT (Massachusetts Institute Technology) presented a thesis paper for his Master’s degree in City Planning. His focus was on a Main Street revitalization for the Fruitvale neighborhood in Oakland which is a very diverse and has many presenting challenges. His report is nearly 100 pages and has many goals to present that Fruitvale can overcome its hurdles and present itself as a vibrant community. The goals that Turner-Lloveras set were part of the

National Main Street Program: economic restructuring, organization, promotion and design. All these elements factor into improving a place. How does this factor into the middle neighborhood not only in Oakland, West Park and throughout America?

To get a better understanding from Turner-Lloveras, he describes Oakland as a whole city. “Yet one must carefully distinguish between the realities and perceptions of crime in Oakland, especially East Oakland. The City has been unfairly characterized by the media and non-residents as a war zone... Investments in Oakland neighborhoods are jeopardized or impeded by exaggerated perceptions of a lack of safety. There are neighborhoods in many areas of the City with concerned residents and families that have a stake in their community. As active members in various crime and neighborhood associations, they provide the social infrastructure necessary for making neighborhoods safe... This reality needs to be included when painting a picture of life in Oakland.”⁵⁴

Turner-Lloveras is passionate of the community much as the residents who reside in Oakland. At the time, he wrote this article, the City of Oakland suffered through two major natural disasters with the World Series Earthquake in 1989 and the Oakland Hills Wildfire in 1991. Just because a city has many misfortunes does not mean that the people who live and work in it have to suffer the outside criticisms and take it. The dedication of people is what makes the community. The population at the time of the study (1990 U.S. Census) in the Fruitvale neighborhood was Latino at 35%, African-American at 30% and Asian at 21% which equals to 86% of the total Fruitvale population. “The Fruitvale has a diverse cultural heritage, and since 1980, immigrants from Latin America and Southeast Asia have settled in the area.”

⁵³ Arnold, Eric K. *Oakland Gang Injunctions: Gentrification or Public Safety?* Race, Poverty and the Environment. Oakland, CA. Volume 18, Number 2. 2011

⁵⁴ Turner-Lloveras, Mario X. *The Main Street Initiative in the Barrio: Commercial Revitalization in the Fruitvale District, Oakland, California.* Massachusetts Institute of Technology. June, 1997.

This is diversity melting pot where many cultures come together and call Fruitvale, home. Many programs and services have happened in Fruitvale from community-based to social clubs to religious institutions that have served the population bases.

What does define Fruitvale? Turner-Lloveras explains the unique quality of Fruitvale is that “there is no other commercial district in the City of Oakland like the Fruitvale. It is one of the liveliest neighborhood commercial strips. During the afternoon, the district is active with pedestrian activity and generates substantial foot traffic. A big draw to the commercial area during lunch hours is the large number of Mexican restaurants which have a reputation for excellence. Local institutions and notable landmarks function as important stabilizing forces.”⁵⁴

The commercial district in Fruitvale attracts people who stop by walk around and take in the experience by having lunch and/or shopping. Having institutions and landmarks that define the direct area also helps a neighborhood. Good services for residents, workforce and visitors is a vital element to spread the word of a community. “In 1996, Oakland's Community and Economic Development Agency indicated that the Fruitvale was the third largest sales generating neighborhood commercial district in the City.”⁵⁴

The numbers for the Fruitvale neighborhood commercial district in the 1990's showed this area was building potential and seeking more of it as well. What character built the potential of Fruitvale to give it's a unique identity of a middle neighborhood? One great factor is the diversity, but how does it play into the potential for a good market? “The Fruitvale also has one the most diverse merchant populations in the City. In 1996 Main Street survey, 122 businesses (conducted by the SSUC) found that while the majority of merchants are Latino (51 percent), there is also a strong multi-ethnic presence in the district which includes: Asians (19 percent), Whites (12

percent), African-Americans (6 percent) and other (12 percent), which includes people of Middle Eastern descent.”⁵⁴

With the diversity not only in the population, but within the businesses is strong focus of a successful middle neighborhood base to attract new residents and business. People will want to try a variety of things (dining, shopping, other services, etc.) and if they are all in the same neighborhood that is walkable, then that can equal to a successful plan. “On May 7th, 1996, Oakland City Council members made a significant move to "showcase the street's diversity" by changing the name of the primary thoroughfare from East 14th to International Boulevard.' It is hoped that this will change the thoroughfare's negative image, and help turn the Fruitvale

Commercial District "into a destination for Bay Area visitors and tourists.”⁵⁴ A branding and great promotion of the neighborhood is important to not just local residents, but also bring new residents, new businesses and many visitors as possible. “The Main Street Program is largely a volunteer-driven and relies heavily on the organization element. Organization establishes "consensus and cooperation by building partnerships" among the various groups-e.g. merchants, property owners, individual citizens etc. - that have a stake in the commercial district.”⁵⁴

There can be concerns and problems, but collaborations and good communication can make a commercial district within a middle neighborhood successful despite barriers. “In multi-ethnic communities, language and cultural barriers are also among the important factors which can make it difficult to bring people together to address problems and develop a shared vision.”⁵⁴

In conclusion, middle neighborhoods are the support of our major inner-cities. Residential and commercial areas help define a sense of place and the desire for the American Dream. New ideas and current problems will clash, but it is a matter of

the stakeholders, residents, public officials and the whole community to seek the best fit for the neighborhood in the long-term plan. West Park has the potential to create more opportunities and strengthen its middle neighborhood status for residential and commercial. The communication and collaboration, plus the interest of those wanting to experience will make West Park a desirable middle neighborhood that everyone will appreciate for many years ahead.

History of Transit-Oriented Development

What is Transit-Oriented Development?

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is most commonly defined as a mixed use, relatively high density, pedestrian-oriented district that is located within a half-mile of a rail, bus, or ferry station. The TOD urban environment must encourage and/or facilitate transit use and active transportation (walking and bicycling) through its urban form.⁵⁵ This may include elements that increase the comfort of all road users such as street-trees, accommodating pedestrian facilities, enhanced crossings, bicycle facilities, and road diets.

⁵⁵ Renne, J. L., & Wells, J. S. (2004). Emerging European-style planning in the USA: Transit-oriented development. *World Transport Policy & Practice*, 10, 2, 12-24.



Figure 78. TOD in Cleveland: The Bus-Rapid-Transit⁵⁶

Early Beginnings

Many American perspectives might recognize and identify TOD as a distinctively European design. European cities often contain obvious public spaces, complete transit networks with higher numbers of transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians. But before the American love affair with the automobile, U.S. cities were also formed and grew in closer accord with TOD ideals. Transit and development linkages have been around since the days of horse and buggy; humans develop opportunities for trade along the routes that they use to travel.

⁵⁷

The original TOD projects began in the late nineteenth and twentieth century with the evaluation of railroads and streetcar suburbs.⁵⁷ Specifically, streetcars and their ability to provide fast and accessible transportation to jobs, shopping, and

housing, created space for neighborhood growth and clustered opportunities in nearby inner ring suburbs. According to Robert Cervero, “the success of the streetcar suburbs was dependent on pedestrian access to transit for connection to downtown jobs and neighborhood services.” Early transit-based neighborhoods were centered on the local transit depot with nearby access to public space, small cottage-type houses, and a street pattern and scale that allowed convenient walking distance to transit.⁵⁸

This type of development would be identified, “Streetcar Suburbs” and closely resembled the idyllic, original ideas of Ebenezer Howard and his Garden Cities of Tomorrow.⁵⁹ The dream would not last long, as the boom of the automobile age in America post-World War II would quickly reshape the landscape of transportation in the U.S. as well as the development opportunities given the further and faster mentality.

The early foundations laid by TOD and streetcars, allowed for booming suburban growth and the fade of the compact, walkable development centered on public transit.⁵⁷

Resurgence of TOD in America

In the 1990’s, TOD would make a comeback to combat the ill effects wrought on city life by the automobile-dependent American public. Peter Calthorpe led the charge as the father of modern TOD in the U.S. Working in San Diego and Sacramento; Calthorpe published numerous books and guidelines on modern TOD that shaped how we understand TOD in the modern age. He focused on future growth that maintained quality of life. Calthorpe’s guiding principles were:

maximize existing urban areas, reduce consumption of non-urban areas, establish land use strategies that encourages transit, reduce the number of auto trips by creating opportunities for alternative modes of travel, protect the natural environment, reduce emissions and conserve energy resources, provide a diversity of housing, and foster more vital, interactive, and secure communities.⁵⁷

Transit-Oriented Development Case Studies

Right in our own Backyard

TOD examples from Cleveland and similar cities can guide future discussions for the West Park Plan. Using proven strategies and learning from both successes and failures will set the stage for TOD at the West Park RTA Station.

Guiding Principles for TOD and the Greater Cleveland Rapid Transit Authority (GCRTA)

The City of Cleveland and neighboring communities in Northeast Ohio have numerous examples of TOD. Many neighborhoods have many examples of TOD planning, with a bit fewer having achieved actual implementation of plan and project execution. The GCRTA guides most TOD projects and have set forth a plan with common goals for all development projects.⁶⁰ These goals include:

- High quality private or public development that is sensitive to the existing built environment.

⁵⁶ Feke, M. (July 27, 2016). *Transit-Oriented Development in Cleveland*. [PDF document]. Retrieved from Ohio Department of Transportation:

http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Conference/Documents/2016Presentations/5-A/feke_5A_2016OCP.pdf

⁵⁷ Braswell, A.D. (2013). *Transit-Oriented Development An Urban Design Assessment of Transit Stations in Atlanta (An Applied Research Paper)*, School of City and Regional Planning, Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia, United States.

⁵⁸ Cervero, Robert. *Transit-Supportive Development in the US*. Washington DC: Federal Transit Administration, 1993.

⁵⁹ Carlton, I. (2007). *Histories of Transit-Oriented Development: Perspectives on the Development of the TOD Concept Real Estate and Transit, Urban and Social Movements, Concept Protagonist (Working Paper)*. Berkeley Institute of Urban and Regional Development, Berkeley, California, United States of America.

⁶⁰ Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority. (2007). *Transit Oriented Development Best Practices*. Cleveland, Ohio.

- Development that promotes and enhances transit ridership by planning uses that are “transit-oriented” and that provide maximum linkages between transit stations and the development for transit patrons, pedestrians, and bicycles.
- Reduction in auto use and congestion through encouragement of transit-linked development.
- Value to RTA based on a fair market return on public investment, future revenue streams, additional taxes, and reduction in the cost of the site construction for RTA.
- Development that maximizes the highest and best use of the real estate based on land use and economic development goals of the surrounding community and conforming to local and regional development plans.
- Value to the neighborhood, the developer and RTA through intensive, high quality development.

W 25th St. Station, Ohio City

Ohio City is a near west side neighborhood that continues to show promise in executing TOD. Focused around the W. 25th St. station, implementation of multiple modes of transportation from the RCRTA as well as the University Hospitals docked bike share program have increased multimodal usage. Specifically, this hosts one of the more popular Red Line stations and there are numerous bus stations stopping in and near the W. 25th St Station.

The W. 25th St. Station is located at the intersection of Carnegie Ave. and W. 24th St. The station is just across the Carnegie Bridge at the entrance to the W. 25th St. Retail Corridor. For the TOD project the primary area included the station itself, as well as the Market Square which is catty-cornered. The

secondary project area includes a ¼ mile radius around the site, with landmarks such as Duck Island Coffee and the West Side Market. The TOD project at W. 25th St. include elements of both actual station improvements and TOD in order to improve the surrounding area and better connect the physical station to the neighborhood. One major factor in connecting to the neighborhood includes incorporating and complementing existing plans. The W. 25th St. TOD project worked in conjunction with more than five existing plans and projects including Ohio City’s Transportation Plan and the Launch Lorain street enhancement project. Other proposed elements include:

- Traffic diversions on Gehring Street
- Lorain Avenue Roadway reconfigurations
- Market Square Shopping Center with a parking garage
- West Side Market parking improvements with greens pace elements
- 1,400 - 1,800 new dwelling units



Figure 79. W. 25th St Proposed TOD Development Project, Courtesy of the Cleveland Planning Commission

Major Partners included the GCRTA, Ohio City Inc. (CDC), Tremont West (CDC), and the City of Cleveland. While major developments are still underway, ODOT Project Objectives include:⁶¹

- Leverage presence of W. 25th Street Station and improve connectivity with the Tremont and Flats/Rivergate neighborhoods
- Provide physical modifications to station to facilitate access from adjacent neighborhoods
- Enhance transportation network to better balance accommodations for all travel modes
- Support livable, walkable environment
- Support and enhance transit ridership
- Incorporate economically feasible TOD
- Support 16-hour activity within the study area
- Incorporate underutilized and publicly owned land
- Provide site-specific development recommendations
- Incorporate overlay zoning and innovation zones, as appropriate

Detroit Shoreway and the W 65th St. Station

Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (DSCDO) developed this project with the assistance from multiple partners. GCRTA sold the land to DSCDO for \$95,000 and is also providing free transit/bus passes for all residential tenants in the building. Enterprise Community Partners provided funding for a pre-development design competition in 2012. Financing for the project included low-income housing tax credit equity, Ohio Housing Finance Agency's Housing Development Assistance Program, federal Affordable Housing Program funds, foundation grants and Cleveland loan proceeds. On top of all that, Cuyahoga

⁶¹ City Planning Commission (2013). W. 25th St Plan and Recommendations [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from <http://www.riderta.com/sites/default/files/tod/2013-06-07-W25TOD-CPCPresentation.pdf>

County's Board of Control contributed a \$450,000 loan for the project through the Federal Home Investment Partnership Fund. In total, the project value is \$10.5 million.⁶²

The timeline of this project is worth noting because the design competition started in 2012 and construction finally completed just a few months ago, in November 2018. With such complex financing, however, it's not a big surprise that it took six years to complete. Another important aspect is that the units are strictly for low-income residents. The units range from 30-60% of AMGI (Area Median Gross Income), with the majority, 24/40, at 60%. This was done intentionally, and thoughtfully, because the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood is experiencing a boom in market-rate housing and DSCDO wants to make sure that new affordable housing is also available.⁶³



**Figure 80. Aspen Place Housing Project,
Courtesy of the Cleveland Planning Commission**

Finally, the geography of the site contributes largely to the project's TOD status. It is located a mere 100 yards or so from the W. 65th St./Lorain Ave., Red Line rapid transit station.

Other noteworthy neighbors include the Zone Recreation Center across Lorain Ave., and the Cleveland EcoVillage just across the tracks (also developed by DSCDO).

Van Aken, Shaker Heights

Shaker Heights is an inner-ring suburb of the City of Cleveland with a lineage closely tied to transit. Led by the Van Sweringen brothers, Shaker Heights early development centered on its rail connection to downtown Cleveland. Capitalizing on this connection 100 years later is the Van Aken District, a mixed-use transit-oriented development at the eastern terminus of the RTA Blue Line.

The Van Aken District was first conceived in 2000 as part of a strategic plan that also included the reconfiguration of the Van Aken Blvd, Warrensville Center Rd, and Chagrin Blvd intersection. The site, immediately adjacent to the RTA station, featured a retail center dominated by large surface parking lots. In 2012, after years of planning and public outreach, the city secured funding for the new intersection layout and, in 2013, partnered with RMS, a private developer, to serve as the master developer for the project.

Project Objectives included:

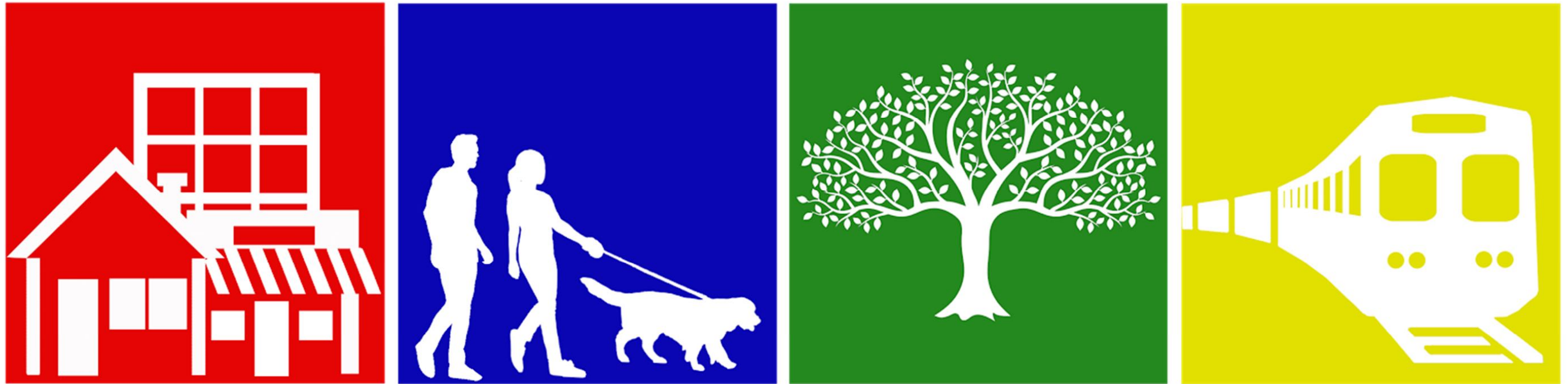
- Create a new mixed use, pedestrian friendly downtown for Shaker Heights
- Promote a design aesthetic that creates a unique identity and sense of place
- Increase transit ridership
- Improve multi-modal transportation options

The initial 7.5-acre phase of the Van Aken District opened in 2018. The site now includes a 66,000 SF office building, 102 apartments, 100,000 SF of retail, and 636 parking spaces. The total cost of the intersection improvements totaled \$18.5 million, while the initial phase of the Van Aken District cost \$100 million to develop. Future phases of the project include an additional 10 acres of development, with additional office and apartment buildings currently proposed, as well as an improved transit station.

Major Partners involved in this project include: City of Shaker Heights, RMS, Ohio Department of Transportation, NOACA, Ohio Public Works Commission, and Cuyahoga County.

⁶² Farkas, Karen (2017, July 26). Detroit Shoreway affordable housing project by RTA rapid station to get underway in August. *Cleveland.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.cleveland.com/cuyahoga-county/2017/07/detroit-shoreway-affordable-housing-project-by-rta-station-to-get-underway-in-august.html>

⁶³ Bullard, Stan (2017, April 21). Aspen place project moves forward on city's West Side. *Crain's Cleveland Business*. Retrieved from <https://www.craincleveland.com/article/20170421/NEWS/170429930/aspen-place-project-moves-forward-on-citys-west-side>



Recommendations



Figure 81. Final Site Plan

The Kmart Site

Introduction

The southern portion of the Connecting West Park study area is a retail and business district bounded by W. 150th St., Lorain Ave., and the RTA Red Line rail corridor. The focus area is shown as the shaded area in Figure 82. This site serves as a gateway into the West Park neighborhood from both the south and east. There are several vacant properties in this area, including a former Kmart retail building on the corner of W. 150th and Lorain Ave. In addition to vacancy, the area has issues with land use compatibility, auto-dependent development, rainwater runoff, and diminished tree canopy coverage. Recommendations include reconfiguring the retail and industrial sites to better serve current and future market demands and increasing green infrastructure on the site.



Figure 82. Map of Focus Area (Viking Planning Group)

Site History

The old Kmart site is noted to have been an established farm⁶⁴ from 1824 to the mid-1940's when the site was turned into a trailer park called Trailer Gardens. The trailer park was eventually sold off and cleared to make way for the construction of Kmart Superstore in 1982. The Kmart store was successful for many years but closed in January of 2018 after a few years of financial difficulties for the Kmart brand as a company. The site and former Kmart building have remained vacant since the closing in early 2018 with the developer experiencing difficulty filling the current structure.

Existing Conditions

The focus area is primarily made up of retail and industrial land uses. The area contains over a dozen businesses, many of which are locally owned and regionally focused. The site is currently configured in an auto-centric fashion with parking lots and curbs cuts disrupting the pedestrian environment. Most of the entire site is made up of impervious surface, creating issues with rainwater retention and heat regulation. Additionally, the area is severely lacking in tree canopy coverage.

The site features multiple vacant and underutilized properties, shown on the next page in Figure 83. The most notable of these vacancies is the former Kmart retail plaza on the corner of W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave. As stated previously, Kmart closed its operations at the site in early 2018, leaving the 89,000 square foot building and large surface parking lot empty. The unused and dated building, while itself unattractive to the neighborhood, it is also attracting undesirable activities, including tractor trailer parking and illegal dumping. The former Kmart building is not the only vacant site in the study area. To the east of the Kmart site is the vacant Ohio Pipe & Supply facility, creating another inactive frontage on Lorain Ave. To the southeast of the Kmart site is the vacant former

Cleveland Die & Manufacturing facility, which uses an easement through the retail plaza parking lot to the north for access to Lorain Ave. This property previously contained a trailer park that is now vacant. Immediately south of the Kmart site is a Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) location. There is discussion that two VFW locations in the neighborhood are considering consolidating their footprint, which may lead to another vacant building in the study area.

While currently this area is filled with inactivity and neglect, there is plenty of opportunity for this area. The intersection of W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave. is a heavily trafficked area with over 20,000 vehicles passing per day on W. 150th and over 14,000 vehicles on Lorain Ave., making it an attractive site for potential retail users and visitors. Additionally, while there are several vacant properties, there are many operating businesses and well maintained industrial properties in the area that can be expanded upon.



Figure 83. Map of Vacant and Underutilized Properties (Viking Planning Group)

⁶⁴ Swilik, Gary. History of the West Park Neighborhood. Virginia Herrington Mohr. June 21, 2008. <http://www.westparkhistory.com/spotlight/Mohr/mohr.htm>



Figure 85. Existing Site Conditions (Viking Planning Group)



Figure 84. Kmart Building and Parking Lot (Viking Planning Group)

Recommendations

Based on the character and potential opportunities of the focus area, as well as the needs of the surrounding neighborhood, it is proposed that this area maintains its role as a center of business and retail. The community engagement process of our project identified a strong desire for retail to return to the former Kmart site, and the site's location on a high traffic intersection in a densely populated area lends itself to this use. The West Park neighborhood is home to a variety of industrial businesses that support valuable jobs to its residents. These industrial jobs also bring an increase in the daytime population to the neighborhood and provide important services to the region. The industrial real estate market in the Cleveland area has been very strong in the past 10 years, with vacancy declining to 5.2% in the first quarter of 2019.⁶⁵ A large reason for the decline in vacancy is the rise of e-commerce, which requires warehouse space for the storage of inventory, as well as logistics and last mile delivery. The recommendation for this site is to redevelop the retail plaza and industrial sites to better serve the needs of the modern retail and industrial users. While doing so, there is also a chance to better differentiate between the industrial and retail uses, which currently blend together at the site, especially with the truck access easement over the former Kmart parking.

Retail Site Recommendations

Market demand as well as demand from community members, showed a strong desire for entertainment as well as a mix of retail in the neighborhood. The existing site of the Kmart could be redeveloped as a modern retail park with parking in the center and stores with green space around the perimeter. The proposed retail site will feature a 40,000 square foot specialty grocery store with street frontage to W. 150th St. and Lorain Ave. A specialty grocery store was one of the most desired options expressed during the community engagement

portion of the project. The 109,000 square foot main shopping plaza will feature an entertainment center such as a bowling alley/arcade as well as a movie theater at the center, Figure 86 demonstrates a proposed rendering of the movie theater. The arms of the plaza will be occupied by other uses shown to be in demand by the market study; clothing and shoes, both fast-casual and sit-down restaurants, and specialty stores.

Having an entertainment anchor would potentially draw in users from outside of the neighborhood and make this retail center a destination center rather than just a community shopping center. An entertainment anchor would cater to all members of the West Park community, regardless of their age. An entertainment center would give senior centers, as well as parents with young children, a place to gather at on evenings and weekends.



Figure 86. Movie Theatre Rendering (Viking Planning Group)

Industrial Site Recommendations

There are three properties around the Kmart site that could better serve the neighborhood redeveloped as modern industrial buildings: the former Ohio Pipe & Supply, former Cleveland Die & Manufacturing, and the current VFW. The

site plan, shown in Figure 88, proposes three new buildings on these sites.

The VFW is proposed as an industrial flex/showroom building. These types of buildings, while primarily industrial, can have some light retail traffic. For example, a stone cutting business that produces countertops will have a showroom space to display materials to customers. This use would effectively transition between the retail plaza to the north and the more industrial uses to the south.

For the Ohio Pipe & Supply and Cleveland Die & Manufacturing properties, two modern high ceiling industrial warehouses are proposed. High ceiling warehouse spaces provide room for tall shelving racks that maximize storage efficiency and are popular with e-commerce distributors. A key to this plan is the new access driveway, removing the need for the current access easement over the retail plaza parking lot. This will allow for truck and employee traffic to have its own means of accessing the industrial properties, improving marketability for both prospective industrial and retail tenants in the focus area. This new access driveway will not increase the already high traffic volume on Lorain Ave. and West 150th St., rather it will provide a more organized flow of traffic.

⁶⁵ Newmark Knight Frank. Cleveland Industrial Market Report, 1Q19, <http://www.ngkf.com/home/research/us-market-reports.aspx?d=6454>.



Figure 89. 3D Proposed Site Plan Looking South (Viking Planning Group)



Figure 88. Proposed Site Plan, North Up (Viking Planning Group)



Figure 87. Proposed Shopping Center Rendering (Viking Planning Group)

Zoning Recommendations

This section will cover in specifics the current zoning and land use designations for the Kmart site. The Kmart site has been divided into three areas;

1. Parcels Topped with Kmart, Popeye's, and Dollar General Buildings, and directly to the Right of Dollar General Building,
2. Parcels Topped with Ohio Pipe Buildings, and,
3. Parcels behind the Kmart and Ohio Pipe.

Area One: Principal Kmart Site

The principal Kmart site consist of 14 parcels with four separate owners. The land is currently zoned as "Local Retail Business". Local Retail Business is defined as "a business district in which such uses are permitted as are normally required for the daily local retail business needs of the residents of the locality only." In this zoning designation the retail business allowed should only be large enough to the service the surrounding neighborhoods and not attract a wide range of people from the greater Cleveland area. This type of zoning limits to a large extent the type of entertainment establishments that can be developed on the lot, but there is a large want for more entertain in the area. We propose requesting a "use variance" from the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow for the development of a movie theater. In order to be granted a use variance, unnecessary hardship that is not self-inflicted must be shown before the board. Here, the site has been vacant for several years despite continuing efforts to fill the vacant building. A movie theater would meet the growing demand for entertainment options by the community. It would be incumbent upon the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow a use variance for this site so the owners can meet that demand for entertainment in the area.



Figure 90. Zoning at Principal Kmart Site (City of Cleveland)

Area Two: Ohio Pipe Site

The Ohio Pipe location consists of two parcels both under one owner. The land is currently split zoned which consist of "semi- industrial" zoning along the street front and "general industrial" zoning in the back. Semi-industrial zoning is "an area usually adjacent to a Retail Business District or more restricted use district, in which ... semi-industrial operations of such nature as not to be detrimental to an adjacent Retail Business District or more restricted use district, are permitted."⁶⁶ In this zoning, storage, light manufacturing, and shipping operations are permitted to be developed. General industrial zoning allows the same uses as semi-industrial zoning but without the restrictions of being next to a retail or other more restricted use districts. The current plan of turning the site into industrial warehouses fits well with the current zoning designation.

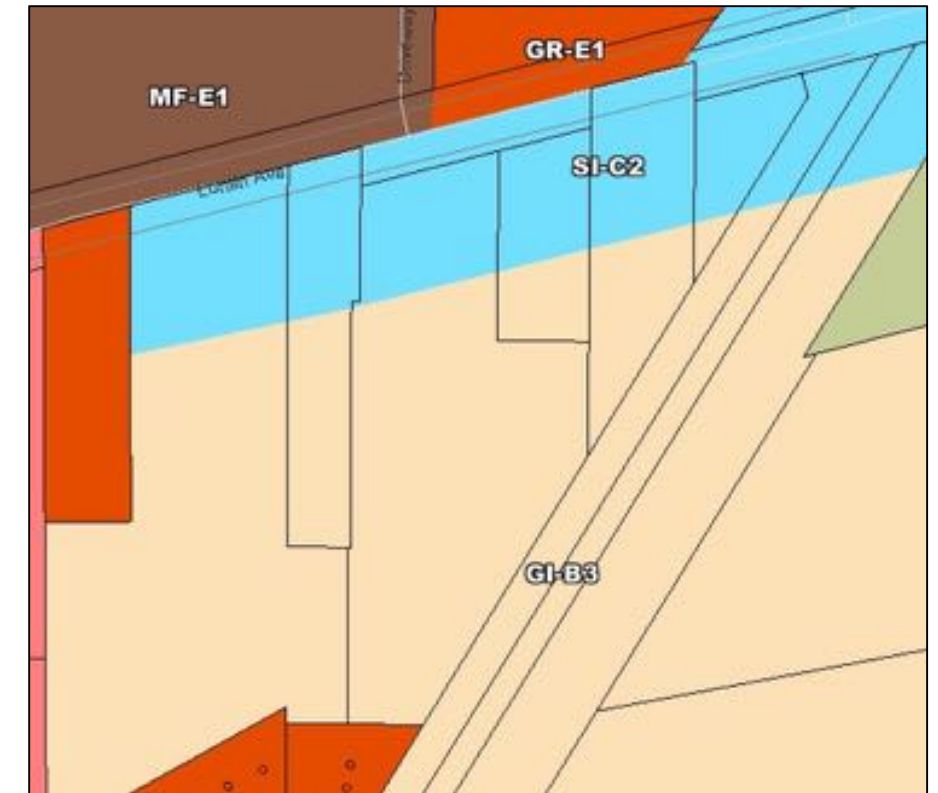


Figure 91. Zoning at Ohio Pipe Site (City of Cleveland)

Area Three: Behind Kmart and Ohio Pipe

The last area behind the Kmart and Ohio Pipe locations consist of six parcels possessed by one owner. The land splits the general industry zoning pattern comprising of mainly "general retail business" zoning. General retail business is defined as "an enterprise for profit for the convenience and service of, and dealing directly with, and accessible to, the ultimate consumer; neither injurious to adjacent premises or to the occupants thereof..."⁶⁶ This zoning specific does not allow the development of uses allowed in the semi-industrial and general industrial zoning districts. In order to develop industry on the land the Board of Zoning Appeals will be required to grant a variance to the zoning designation for these parcels.

⁶⁶ City of Cleveland Codified Ordinances. Retrieved from http://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/cleveland_oh/

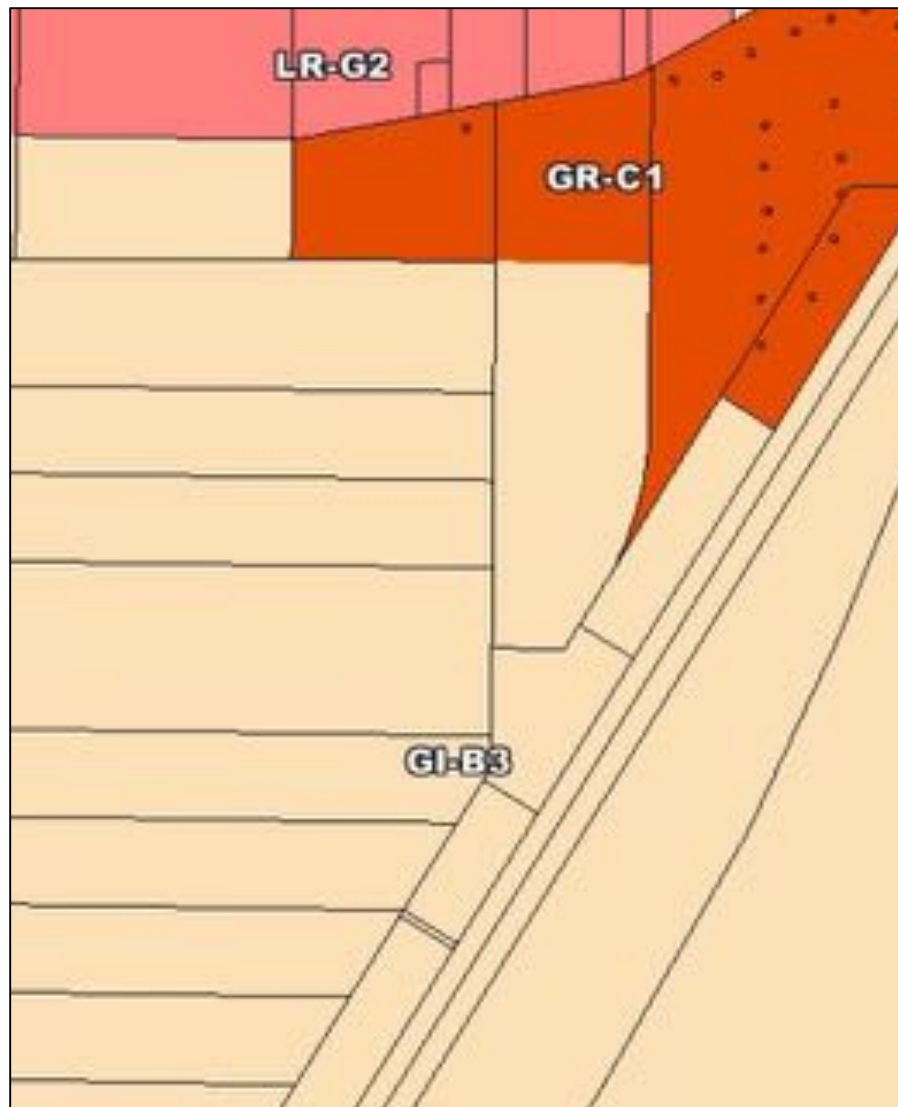


Figure 92. Zoning at Area Behind Kmart and Ohio Pipe
(City of Cleveland)

Conclusion

The Kmart site provides a large section of land in the West Park neighborhood that can be used to reinvigorate the area. Over time the zoning designations do not correspond with today's current development climate. With minor variances to the zoning in the area, the Kmart site can be reactivated to

create new entertainment, employment, and green space for the West Park community.

Environmental Recommendations

An important goal of the Connecting West Park plan is to improve stormwater retention and permeability in the neighborhood, while also increasing the tree canopy coverage throughout the study area. The current conditions of the focus area are lacking in both of these areas. The retail plaza is nearly entirely paved, and the industrial sites surrounding the area are not far behind. It is proposed that all redeveloped sites follow best practices in on-site stormwater management to increase permeability in the area and reduce sewer runoff. Including one to two bioswales at the site could also be an option to help reduce sewer and stormwater runoff. Where possible, during redevelopment, mature growth trees should be kept in place. New trees are proposed to be added on the retail plaza and along Lorain Ave, including a planted green buffer in front of the industrial warehouse. Adding trees to the area will aid in stormwater management and reduce heat island effect. Trees are also an important feature of the West Park and Kamm's Corners neighborhood, which boasts as some of the most dense tree canopy in the City of Cleveland. Improving tree canopy in the focus area will better connect this area with the surrounding residential areas.

Financial Analysis

Land Acquisition and Site Control

The former Kmart and adjacent Dollar General building are owned by a single developer out of New York City.⁶⁷ The VFW post, Ohio Pipe site, and Cleveland Die & Manufacturing site are each controlled by different entities. Depending on which entities would develop the proposed retail and industrial developments, site control would need to be secured to proceed. Cuyahoga County has the owners and

appraised values of the proposed sites for redevelopment as follows.⁶⁸ The sum of total county values will be used later to

Parcel	Site	Deeded Owner	County Value
027-27-018	Dollar General	CLEVELAND , OH CENTER LLC	\$ 18,300
027-27-002	Dollar General	CLEVELAND, OH CENTER, LLC	71,400
027-27-003	Dollar General	CLEVELAND, OH REALTY, LLC	499,500
027-27-004	Dollar General	CLEVELAND, OH REALTY, LLC	182,200
027-27-014	Dollar General	CLEVELAND, OH REALTY, LLC	37,000
027-27-006	Kmart	CLEVELAND, OH CENTER LLC	283,100
027-27-007	Kmart	CLEVELAND, OH CENTER LLC	148,200
027-27-008	Kmart	CLEVELAND, OH CENTER LLC	1,764,800
027-27-009	Kmart	CLEVELAND, OH CENTER LLC	75,600
027-27-017	Kmart	KMART CORP	80,000
027-27-019	Kmart	KMART CORP	96,200
027-27-020	Kmart	KMART CORPORATION	25,100
027-27-005	Popeye's	A.E.S. MANAGEMENT CORP	465,300
027-27-013	Cowan's Pub	CLEVELAND OH PAD, LLC	396,300
027-27-011	Cle. Die & Manufacturing	WPE LLC	1,150,000
027-27-001	Ohio Pipe	IMP PARTNERS LLC	720,200
027-27-012	Trailer Park	WPE LLC	152,500
027-28-013	Trailer Park	WPE LLC	25,000
027-33-016	Trailer Park	WPE LLC	19,800
027-27-010	VFW	G ONEIL POST #2533	191,200
027-27-016	VFW	WPE LLC	76,700
TOTAL VALUES			\$ 6,478,400

Figure 93. Parcels and County Valuation (Viking Planning Group)
approximate land costs when calculating estimated project costs.

Environmental Remediation

Environmental issues at the site are expected to be minimal. Land use in our proposed development does not differ from historical land use at the respective sites; we propose retail development on land previously used for retail, and industrial development on land previously used for industry. Inquiry with the broker representing the Cleveland Die and Manufacturing indicated that the building requires no remediation for further use, while the former trailer park land adjacent to the building is not expected to have any contamination issues due to previous use.

⁶⁷ Properties: TLM Realty. Retrieved from TLM Realty website: <http://www.tlmltd.com/properties1.html>

⁶⁸ Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer. Cuyahoga County Property Records. Retrieved from <https://myplace.cuyahogacounty.us/MainPage/PropertyData>

Demolition

Demolitions will be required of various buildings including Kmart, Dollar General, and Ohio Pipe. In 2016, Simons and Goldman estimated mass building demolitions in Greater Cleveland to be around \$6 per square foot.⁶⁹ Based on the Federal Government’s CPI Inflation Index,⁷⁰ this is roughly equivalent to \$6.50 today. Demolition Estimates are as follows, with square footage estimates taken from the County Fiscal Office.

Building	Square Footage	Estimated Demo Cost
Dollar General	20,020	\$ 130,130
Kmart	84,994	552,461
Ohio Pipe	53,096	345,124
VFW	5,002	32,513
Totals	163,112	\$ 1,060,228

Figure 94. Demolition Costs (Viking Planning Group)

Excavation/Earthwork

The costs related to excavation and earthwork to prepare sites for construction vary greatly depending on site conditions, and therefore they are difficult to measure without engineering studies having already been performed. The site appears relatively flat and should not require large amounts of excavation. A recent project in the area had around \$1 million of earthwork for a 15 acre site. The total of all the parcels listed above in the “Land Acquisition and Site Control” section is 25 acres. Extrapolating the costs from the 15 acre site, earthwork for the West Park site will be estimated at \$1.67 million. Engineering studies completed later in the process will refine this estimate.

Construction of Industrial Buildings

Our proposed industrial development involves the renovation of the pre-existing Cleveland Die and Manufacturing building

(roughly 60,000 square feet) along with the construction of a new, 80,000 square feet industrial building further north at the Ohio Pipe site. In addition, a 25,000 square feet building will be constructed at the VFW site. Based on a cursory examination of numbers from recent projects, construction of industrial buildings in greater Cleveland, including architecture, engineering, construction, and an allowance for tenant improvements, currently averages around \$55 per square foot. The existing Cleveland Die and Manufacturing building is being marketed by a broker for lease and/or sale, and likely needs relatively little done in terms of renovation and rehab. We will estimate costs at \$15 per square foot, roughly 25% of the cost of new construction.

Based on the assumptions described above, we estimate costs for construction and renovation of industrial buildings below:

Building	Square Footage	Cost p.s.f.	Estimated Cost
New Construction at Ohio Pipe Site	80,000	\$ 55	\$ 4,400,000
New Construction at VFW Site	25,000	55	1,375,000
Rehab at Cle. Die & Manufacturing	60,000	15	900,000
Totals	165,000		6,675,000

Figure 95. Construction of Industrial Buildings (Viking Planning Group)

Construction of Retail Buildings

Simons and Goldman in 2016 estimated construction of new retail buildings in Greater Cleveland at \$100 per square foot plus tenant improvements. Inflated to 2019 dollars, this is roughly \$107 per square foot.

The proposed retail buildings are 109,000 square feet and 40,000 square feet. Cost estimates are shown below:

Building	Square Footage	Cost p.s.f.	Estimated Cost
Large Retail Building at Kmart Site	109,000	\$ 107	\$ 11,663,000
Small Retail Building at Street	40,000	107	4,280,000
Totals	149,000		15,943,000

Figure 96. Construction of Retail Buildings (Viking Planning Group)



Figure 97. Rendering of Building at Lorain and W. 150th (Viking Planning Group)

Roadways, Parking Lots, and Landscaping

Simons and Goldman estimate parking lots to cost an average of \$4,000 per space. Between the retail and industrial uses of the site, a roughly 400 space parking lot is a conservatively high estimate which would cost \$1,600,000 to build. Greenspaces, landscaping, and roadways will cost another several million to build, but accurate estimates will not be available until further design work is completed. We will budget a conservative estimate of an additional \$4 million for all roadways, parking lots, and landscaping.

⁶⁹ Simons, R. A., & Goldman, A. (2018, February). UST 623 Lecture: Development Costs. Presented at Cleveland State University.

⁷⁰ CPI Inflation Calculator. Retrieved from US Bureau of Labor Statistics: <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>

Total Costs

Summing all of the costs from the above sections, industrial and retail redevelopment of the Kmart area is roughly a \$36 million project, as seen in the detail below:

Item	Cost
Land Acquisition	\$ 6,478,400
Demolition	1,060,228
Earthwork	1,666,667
Industrial Construction	6,675,000
Retail Construction	15,943,000
Roadways, Parking, and Landscaping	4,000,000
Totals	\$ 35,823,295

Figure 98. Total Costs of Development (Viking Planning Group)

Sources of Financing

Large regional banks are the primary source of loans for construction projects of this type. Typically, loans are made at 80% of the project's "as-completed" appraised value. The development team would be responsible for raising additional amounts in equity investments.

The project's financial feasibility could be endangered if the project is appraised at a value lower than the total investment. This issue has arisen in the Cleveland area in recent years, and is typically due to market rents not being high enough to cover construction costs. In these cases, government assistance, known as "gap financing," is sometimes offered if the project is deemed to be in the public interest.

One common form of gap financing which likely would fit the project's needs is tax-increment financing ("TIF"), a way to redirect the property taxes on the increased property value

back to the project.⁷¹ Typically, bonds are issued by the local port authority backed by those tax payments, allowing developers to get an influx of cash to use towards construction.

In Ohio, tax-increment financing can last a maximum of thirty years. The City of Cleveland in recent years has offered TIF on the 40% of taxes that does not impact the local public schools for the full thirty years. The City typically requires that developers pledge to create several hundred well-paying jobs in return for its offer, however, due to the nature of the project this would not be a problem for the developer.

If we make a conservative estimate on the project's increase in taxable value at only two thirds of construction costs (not including land acquisition and demolition), the project will potentially generate around \$19 million in increased taxable value. Currently, the effective property tax rate in the City is 3.34%,⁷² so the non-school portion of taxes on the increased value the first year would be approximately \$253,840.

Assuming county assessed property values increase 1% per year for thirty years and property tax rates do not change, the net present value at 7% (current market rate for TIF bonds) of thirty years of redirected non-school property tax payments is roughly \$3.5 million. This \$3.5 million bond issuance would likely help bridge any financing gaps.

Another potential source of gap financing is JobsOhio, the State of Ohio's nonprofit economic development agency. JobsOhio's Revitalization Program⁷³ offers loans and grants to developers, businesses, or local governments for projects which revitalize abandoned or under-utilized properties and create at least 20 jobs. Eligible costs include demolitions, environmental remediation, site preparation, infrastructure, and other costs applicable to the project. JobsOhio has a

lucrative source of funding from profits from Ohio's liquor wholesaling business, and therefore has the capacity to make loans up to \$5 million, depending on project economic impact.



Figure 99. Retail Center Rendering (Viking Planning Group)

Industrial Economic Impact

A 162,500 square foot industrial building under construction on Cleveland's West Side is expected to create at least 100 jobs and \$5.5 million in annual payroll.⁷⁴ Our proposed amount of industrial space is, coincidentally, very similar at 165,000, so we will use the same estimates for job creation and payroll. Accounting for the fact that some of the new employees may already work in/pay income tax to the City of Cleveland, we will assume that 50% of the payroll will be new income tax revenue for the City. At the City's 2.5% income tax rate, this will generate around \$68,750 in annual income taxes for the City.

⁷¹ Ohio Revised Code Chapter 5709. Retrieved from <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/5709>

⁷² Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer. Levy Impacts on Your Current Bill. Retrieved from https://treasurer.cuyahogacounty.us/pdf_treasurer/en-US/2018LevyImpacts.pdf

⁷³ JobsOhio. JobsOhio Revitalization Program. Retrieved from <https://www.jobsohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/jobsohio-loan-and-grant-programs/jobsohio-revitalization-program/>

⁷⁴ Higgs, R. (2018, August 15). City Council action clears way for new life at old Midland Steel site on Cleveland's West Side. Cleveland.com. Retrieved from https://www.cleveland.com/cityhall/2018/08/city_council_action_clears_way.html

Retail Economic Impact

Retail jobs and economic impact are harder to predict, due to the amount of part-time workers. Customer analytics firm Buxton estimates that typical 200,000 square foot community shopping centers employ between 400 and 500 workers.⁷⁵ For our 149,000 square feet of retail, we will estimate 300 workers will be employed. If half are full-time and half are part-time, and all make \$10 per hour, estimated payroll will be around \$4,680,000. Using the same income tax calculation method as used above for industrial impact, the retail development will generate around \$58,500 in annual income taxes for the City.

West Park Station

Site Overview

The RTA Redline, West Park Rapid Station and the Triskett Park Subdivision is the gateway into the Kamm's Corners section of the West Park neighborhood of Cleveland. The station and subdivision are located along the Norfolk Southern rail which has the RTA Redline parallel and is in between Downtown Cleveland and Hopkins International Airport, which are two main public nodes that are familiar with many Northeast Ohioans. The site has a rapid station that was built in 1958 and last renovated in 1996. Other stations on the Redline have received modern upgrades.

There are minimal retail options which could be improved and expanded upon. The residential options are limited and more equity and affordability is sought out, but the housing stock has gotten outdated.

Site History

In the 1910's, the West Park site was a railroad spur as the railroad passed through the neighborhood coming from Downtown Cleveland and headed west and southwest. From the 1920's through the early 1950's, the West Park site was

home to a lumber yard and a greenhouse. Originally, the entrance at Lloyd Peterson and Lorain Ave. was a ground level railroad crossing. A bridge was eventually built with Lorain Ave. going into the underpass which remains today. In the 1950's, residential and commercial properties were springing up in the area. The Redline Rapid, which was then run by Cleveland Transit System (CTS), was created in 1955. "On Nov. 15, 1968, a federal grant financed a four-mile rail extension to Hopkins International Airport, making Cleveland the first city in the Western Hemisphere to offer direct rapid transit service to its major airport."⁷⁶

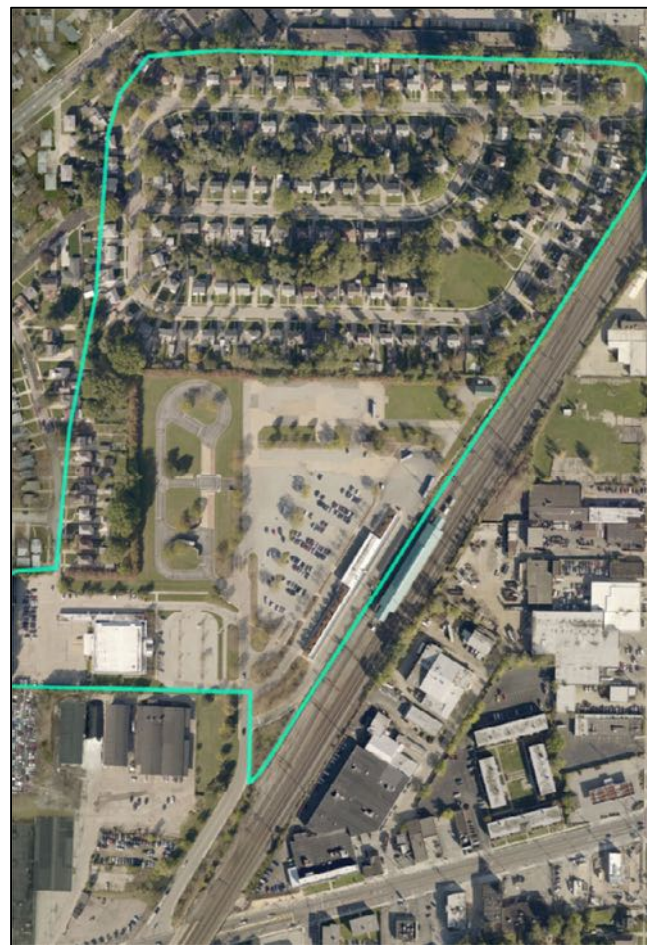


Figure 100. Site Outline

Summary of Proposal

The proposed redevelopment of the West Park RTA station is heavily focused on elements of transit-oriented development that will both encourage and promote a diversity of uses and improved access for users and residents. At present, the site is relatively barren and underutilized. In order to capitalize on the latent potential of the space, the recommended redevelopment of the West Park RTA Station site involves a diversity of residential units to accommodate a variety of the populous, satellite retail space, a public plaza, general improvement on amenities provided, public green space and a park, and green infrastructure.

Community Voice

Survey Takeaways

In the West Park Patron survey, respondents were asked what type of housing West Park could use more of. Options included single-family house, two-family house/duplex, apartment, townhouse, or other, and respondents could select as many housing types as they wished. Nearly 1,600 responses were submitted by over 1,200 respondents, 48 percent of whom indicated that West Park could use more single-family houses, 38 percent of whom indicated townhouses, 15 percent of whom indicated apartments, and 9 percent of whom indicated two-family houses/duplexes. The "other" category produced a variety of responses, the most notable of which were that West Park could use no additional housing, senior housing, and condominiums, at 5, 3, and 2.5 percent, respectively.

⁷⁵ The Impact of Retail on a Community's Employment. Retrieved from The Buxton Company website: <https://www.buxtonco.com/blog/the-impact-of-retail-on-a-communitys-employment>

⁷⁶ <http://www.riderta.com/history>

Housing Preferences		
	# of Responses	% of Respondents
Single-family house	596	48%
Townhouse	474	38%
Apartment	186	15%
Two-family house/duplex	114	9%
Other (please be specific)	203	16%
Total Responses	1573	
Total Respondents	1244	

Figure 101. Patron Survey- Housing Preferences

Survey respondents indicated a clear preference for lower-density housing, favoring single-family houses, which are the predominant housing type in the neighborhood, and townhouses, which are less common, but allow for slightly more density than does single-family housing. Given that survey respondents could choose more than one housing type, it is possible that, were there more responses to choose from, the response rate for no additional housing, senior housing, and condominiums may have been higher. While the percentage of responses in each of these categories is relatively small, they represent 60, 39, and 31 individual responses, respectively, which is important to note considering that the “other” category represents top-of-mind responses that individuals input with no additional context.

Respondents with household incomes over \$100,000 preferred single-family houses and townhouses, at 53 and 44 percent, respectively, which represent higher proportions than that of the overall respondents. Only 7.5 percent of these respondents felt West Park could use more apartments. Respondents with incomes between \$65,000 and \$99,999 responded similarly, though were slightly less favorable to single-family houses and townhouses, and more favorable to apartments. Respondents with incomes between \$30,000 and \$64,999, and incomes under \$30,000 preferred single-family houses and townhouses in proportions lower than that of overall respondents and

avored apartments in proportions higher than that of overall respondents. It is important to keep in mind that, because respondents could select as many housing types as they liked, the total percent of housing types totals over 100 percent.

In looking at the table below, it is interesting to note that the proportion of respondents in each income range that supported single-family houses and townhouses decreased as income decreased, and the proportion of respondents in each income range that favored two-family houses and apartments increased as income decreased. It is also important to note, however, that while the number of respondents in each of the three highest income brackets are relatively similar, the number of respondents falling in the under \$30,000 range total less than one-third that of each of the other income brackets. This is especially important because, per 2017 Census data, only 9 percent of households in our study area fall in the over \$100,000 household income range, while 40 percent fall in the under \$30,000 range. In fact, there were three times more survey respondents that had household incomes over \$100,000 than even exist in our study area, meaning that these survey responses likely reflect the desires of West Park residents from elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Housing Preferences by Income					
	Over \$100,000	\$65,000-\$99,999	\$30,000-\$64,999	Under \$30,000	Total Responses
Single-family house	196	178	142	43	559
Townhouse	165	138	121	33	457
Apartment	28	58	66	27	179
Two-family house/duplex	24	26	38	22	110
Total Respondents	371	361	334	110	

Figure 102. Patron Survey- Income

The West Park Patron survey also asked what redevelopment or other changes respondents would like to see at the RTA Station. This was an open-ended question and produced a variety of responses from 794 respondents. The largest response, at 27 percent, was that respondents would like to see increased security and police presence at the RTA station. Additionally, 18 percent of respondents did not want to see any changes at the RTA station, 15 percent wanted increased safety, and 10 percent wanted improved cleanliness. Other notable responses included better access and signage,

improved lighting, the development of coffee, food, or other small retail locations, and the modernization of the RTA station.

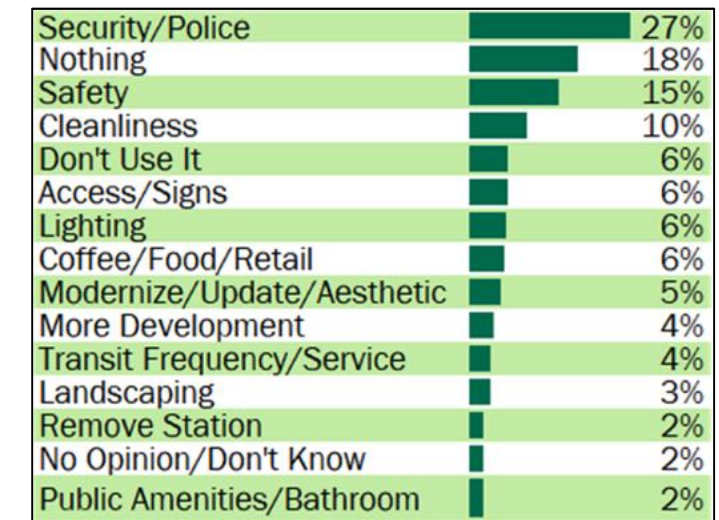


Figure 103. Patron Survey- Wanted Changes

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Transit + Highway Access
- Centrally located
- Free of noise pollution
- Housing occupancy

Weaknesses

- Cut off/lack of quality connections to neighborhood
- Poor land use- excess of parking
- Lack of activity/attractions (retails, restaurants, etc.)
- Poor lighting and perception of safety

Opportunities

- Redevelopment of underutilized RTA training facilities
- Preserve historic nature of Rainbow duplexes
- Improve green space

- Neighborhood connections to North and West, Lorain entrance to south

Threats

- Continued decline/vacancy
- Falling transit ridership & funding
- Neighborhood opposition to potential development
- Staying relevant as other neighborhoods grow

Mobility

Current Conditions

Despite having strong city connections via transit to west Cleveland, the airport, and Downtown—as well as convenient car access to major freeways and roads—the West Park Rapid Station is relatively isolated in the immediate context of the neighborhood. The sense of isolation stems from missing network connections, barriers (the railroad especially), and the recession of the station up and away from the main corridor (about ¼ mile from Lorain Ave). Several survey answers attest to the perception of the station as an island or cul-de-sac, which is not conducive to transit-oriented development that thrives off connectivity, activity and density. Paradoxically, this isolation also “embeds” the station in the residential fabric in a unique way and has great potential to be a neighborhood gateway with the right changes to the transportation network, land use and sense of place.

West Park Rapid Station is a major hub for the GCRTA network. The station census tract (1235.02) has about the same percentage (about 10%) of commuting via transit as the City of Cleveland. Considering this is one of only a dozen census tracts with a rail station, and that other “station census tracts” have rates in the 20-30%, there is room to grow for ridership.

The station is currently designed as a park-and-ride for customers. Originally, this station was the terminus of the Redline when it opened in 1958. It was renovated last in 1996 and many consider it old-fashioned and in need of updates.

While not as high-profile or recognizable (because lack of sense of place and isolation), this station is as significant a transit hub as places like W.25th and Shaker Square in terms of ridership and service planning.

In the context of the transit network, it is a major transfer hub for five bus routes and one heavy rail line. However, counts show a utilization of only 30% of the surface lot, with some having concerns about their vehicles being left in an area with so little activity. Significant numbers arrive via other GCRTA buses, often with some waiting time in between trips. During the week, only two of the six routes have less than or equal to 15-minute headways. Due to the separated platform that is only accessible via tunnel, it is not convenient (even if there were retail, public space, or housing developed) to spend time away from the platform because there is uncertainty in missing a train or bus. Based on general observations, a small minority of riders arrive via bike or walking. There is mostly day-time usage; it is a peak hour station with very little activity outside of regular commute hours.

The commuting patterns into and out of our West Park study area reflect a two-way flow: about one thousand people go out to work and a thousand come in (as of 2015). A significant portion of the outflow is to Downtown and University Circle, while most of the inflow is further east along Lorain and contained in west Cleveland. There may be more who would use the station to reach employment in the industrial/commercial zone (Area II) if there were proper first/last mile connections for it to be more convenient than single-occupancy vehicles.

Nearby northern streets are residential and are calm environments for walking and bicycling. Triskett Rd at the northern edge of the site is a continuous bike lane from Berea Rd to Lorain Rd. There is no clear path from the northwest and north down into the site, however, for all modes of travel. This brings up one of the biggest mobility weaknesses of the station area: the poorly lit, narrow, cut-through path from

Tuckahoe Ave through the north-east corner of the station parking lot.

Our transportation-related recommendations follow our vision and goals to improve connectivity and encourage more multi-modal, environmentally sustainable transportation options, using the station to its full potential.

Primary Recommendations

- Extend Bartter Ave. with a multi-use path or full road
 - First and foremost, this shortens west to east connections to the station and improves connectivity.
 - Secondly, this splits the 600 ft. long block off Lorain Ave. into two and allows spin-off development from the transit-oriented development
- Redesign W. 145th entryway
 - Clear multi-use path with markings and lighting features
 - Urban form improvements, such as new townhomes or other means, will establish more as a western entrance instead of a backdoor
 - Room for creative landscaping, public art, and other place-making efforts



Figure 104. Example for New W. 145th Path

- Micro-mobility at the station
 - Potential UH bike station as part of western expansion; cost of a dock is \$900 according to site (does not include bikes)
 - Embrace upcoming scooter legislation that reintroduces scooters to help solve first/last mile problems with this station
 - Install real-time transit info board and bike share to improve experience



Figure 105. UH Bikes



Figure 106. Electric Scooters

- Create new northern gateway into transit area
 - Sufficiently wide path more centrally located and public
 - Proper lighting and signage to indicate

- Transition between single/two- family homes into townhomes so it existing neighborhood context is respected while leveraging the station
- Bike junction on Triskett Rd.
 - Add simple bicycle turn box at Gramatan & Triskett Rd. to create a comfortable and safe route that people of all ages can use without fear to enter station



Figure 107. Example for Gramatan/Triskett Rd.

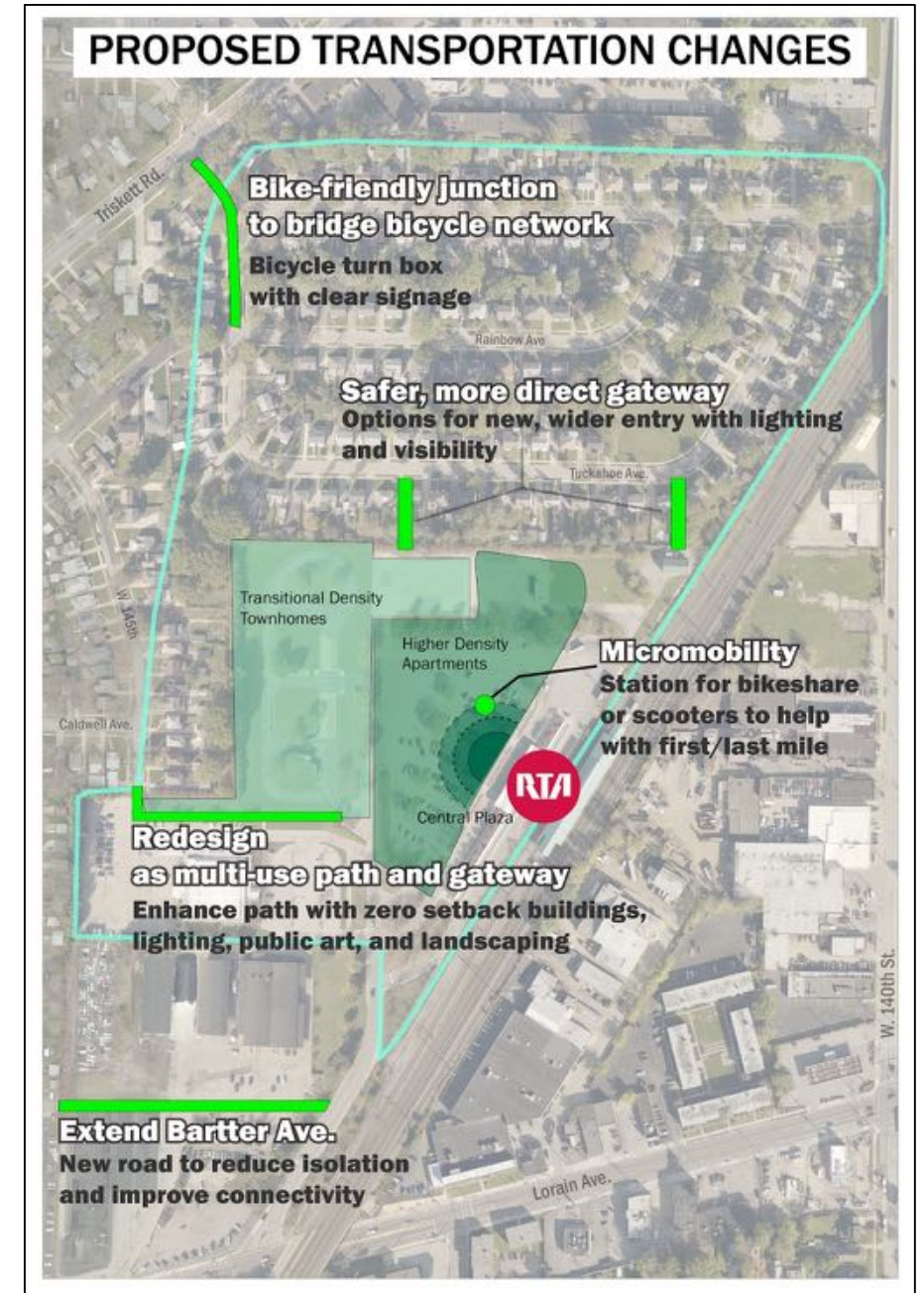


Figure 108. Location of Proposed Changes

Long-Term Options

Generally, transit stations are strategically located near land uses that support ridership (density, mixed-use, little to no parking) and attached to major network nodes, like edges or intersections of corridors. Convenient entry and exit in the most accessible and visible locations are commonly the most desired transit nodes. Lorain Ave. is the historic corridor for

the neighborhood, providing a direct route through the west side towards the center of Cleveland. But West Park Rapid Station is isolated from Lorain Ave: it's pushed ¼ mile back from the street and half of its walkshed blocked off to the east by the tracks.

A small, but vocal percentage of survey responses, as well as stakeholder interviews, reflect an interest in moving the station up towards Lorain Ave. for convenience and improved access. While our primary recommendation is to keep the station as is for now, we also offer this more ambitious scenario as a long-term option for the neighborhood. This move can dovetail with efforts to strengthen the built environment along Lorain Ave. as well as the pedestrian experience, while also, ironically, pleasing current backyard neighbors of the station that prefer a more suburban, isolated lifestyle anyway. The railroad overpass is currently a perceived barrier that many avoid because of its poor lighting and lack of activity; moving the station and upgrading it in a fashion similar to Little Italy - University Circle Station would eliminate a major impediment for people who avoid that underpass, among other aesthetic benefits.



Figure 109. Little Italy Station

In 2016, GCRTA opened the Little Italy - University Circle Station, after relocating it about .3 miles south from its previous location. The project cost \$15.6 million dollars, which is similar to the speculative figure (\$10 to \$20 million) we arrived at from our research and stakeholder interviews. The bus layover area would have to be reconfigured.



Figure 110. Hypothetical Station Relocation

GCRTA Bus Training Course Relocation

Because our proposal for the station area includes development of the current bus training course (also known as the “rodeo”) we considered locations that could fulfill the same role for GCRTA. Although GCRTA uses the bus rodeo less often in recent years and increasingly relies on other forms of training, there would still be utility for training purposes. GCRTA has expressed interest in keeping a bus rodeo. We offer here one potential spot to relocate. The process of relocating doesn’t need to be sudden either, as the housing development we propose would likely be taken on in phases.



Figure 111. Relocation of Bus Rodeo

Housing

Gap Analysis

The housing gap analysis conducted for our study area indicated a lack of supply of housing in both the high and low ends of the market, based on the median household income of current residents. The supply of owner-occupied housing priced at \$29,999 or less, and \$150,000 or more, is 37 units and 142 units shy of demand, respectively. The supply of renter-occupied housing priced at \$374 or less, and \$1,250 or more, is 147 and 327 units shy of demand, respectively.

Household Income Range	No. of Households	Housing Price Range				Supply		Demand		Gap	
		Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied		Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
		Low	High	Low	High						
Total	1329					410	919	410	919		
Less than \$10,000	146	\$ -	\$ 29,999	\$ -	\$ 249	8	9	45	101	(37)	(92)
\$10,000 to \$14,999	95	\$ 30,000	\$ 44,999	\$ 250	\$ 374	59	11	29	66	30	(55)
\$15,000 to \$24,999	204	\$ 45,000	\$ 74,999	\$ 375	\$ 624	84	340	63	141	21	199
\$25,000 to \$34,999	177	\$ 75,000	\$ 104,999	\$ 625	\$ 874	99	391	55	122	44	269
\$35,000 to \$49,999	221	\$ 105,000	\$ 149,999	\$ 875	\$ 1,249	152	159	68	153	84	6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	221	\$ 150,000	\$ 224,999	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,874	8	9	68	153	(60)	(144)
\$75,000 to \$99,999	146	\$ 225,000	\$ 299,999	\$ 1,875	\$ 2,499	0	0	45	101	(49)	(101)
\$100,000 to \$149,999	91	\$ 300,000	\$ 449,999	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,749	0	0	28	63	(29)	(63)
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9	\$ 450,000	\$ 599,999	\$ 3,750	\$ 4,999	0	0	3	6	(3)	(6)
\$200,000 or more	19	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	0	0	6	13	(6)	(13)

Figure 112. Housing Gap Analysis

Proposal

Housing Affordability

The results of the housing gap analysis provide two distinct housing products. The first is a market-rate product, and the second is a deeply affordable product. The market-rate product consists of for-sale housing, priced in the \$150,000 to \$299,999 range, and high-end rental housing in the \$1,250 to \$2,499 range. The affordable product consists of subsidized rental housing, where tenants pay only \$374 per month. For-sale affordable housing under \$29,999 is not feasible and thus has not been included in our proposal.

Housing Typology

The insights gleaned from the survey results provided a framework from which to create a housing typology for the West Park station. While single-family was the top choice for survey respondents, developing single-family homes on a site so close to transit is not appropriate from a land use or equity

perspective. Townhouses provide a far better land use alternative and are also well-liked by survey respondents. Though apartments did not fare as well in the survey responses, they are the ideal housing type for the site considering both the proximity to transit, and the population they are intended to serve.

Our proposal thus includes 80 for-sale townhouses, and 310 apartments, 106 of which are senior apartments. The townhouses are geared towards higher-income buyers, priced at \$250,000, and are clustered on the northwest corner of the site, on RTA-owned land. The apartment component is comprised of 180 market-rate units, and 130 affordable units. The high-end market-rate units, which are priced at \$1,300 for a 2-bedroom, consist of 117 family apartments, which are located on the northeast corner of the site in a 4-story building, and 63 senior apartments, which are located just south of the townhouses. The affordable units are priced at \$785 for a 2-bedroom to adhere to the 2018 Low HOME Rent Limit for Cleveland and are affordable to households earning less than 50 percent of the area median income. The affordable component consists of 87 family apartments, located in the center of the site on the western edge of the plaza, and 43 senior apartments, located just south of the market-rate senior units. In order for the affordable units to fill the existing gap for rentals priced at less than \$374, housing vouchers or other public subsidies would be required. The market-rate and affordable units are located in separate buildings only because it is more challenging to finance mixed-income buildings.

Retail

Currently, the only retail that exists within the West Park Rapid Station site is the post office. However, there is nothing to serve transit users, or the community.

Proposal

When creating a transit-oriented development ground floors should be activated through retail or services. Retail in our proposed development should best serve both transit users and residents. We are proposing a handful of quick service retail and dining options that would benefit people on the go. On the plaza we are proposing small-format retail stores similar in scale to Rebol on Public Square. These small-format stores could include a café, and a small convenience store. Within the station, there should be vending machines. We are also proposing a day care center, which could be beneficial to potential residents, transit users, and potentially attract more transit users. An example of this locally is the Horizon daycare center at the Triskett Rapid Station.



Figure 113. Example of Plaza Retail

There are a variety of other retail options and services that could benefit potential residents, transit users, and also possibly attract people from the neighborhood and outside of the neighborhood. A sit-down restaurant could serve as an attraction to bring in residents from neighboring areas. A gym, and co-working space could serve as great amenities for new residents and the community.

The potential downside of commercial space within this development is how isolated it is from the neighborhood. It is set back from Lorain Ave. and does not have adequate connections to neighboring areas. Battery Park, while not a TOD development, faces similar issues with it being set back and isolated. The low volume of traffic has caused issues with retail and restaurants (Brookbank, 2017). However, with newly proposed units of housing and thousands of transit users, retail could be feasible.

Public Space



Figure 114. Pleasant Hill BART Station

At roughly 12 acres of readily developable area, the public space that currently exists does not function well for the heavy volume of transit users or potential development. Transit users are relegated to an outdated bus and train station. There is an excessive number of impervious surfaces, with a parking lot that is underutilized and a training bus rodeo that could be placed elsewhere.

Proposal

In our new development we would propose roughly 1.5 acres of open space as a plaza, and 1 acre of park space with a playground. We have also proposed a greenway running north-south to create connections, and to create a direct path for senior residents to the park. This 2.5 acres of active space would be in addition to more than an acre of passive green space that will include multiple rain gardens. This would benefit residents, transit riders, and community members. Within these public spaces there would be a variety of components.



Figure 115. Highland Park Station Transit Plaza

In addition to public space additions for the RTA redevelopment site, we are also proposing to renovate the area under the W. 140th St. Bridge at Gramatan Ave. This urban void could be readapted into a neighborhood recreational space to include a variety of things such as an obstacle course, sport facilities, and swings. To create a safer, and more enjoyable space, we would also propose to implement lighting, trash and recycling receptacles, and murals on the bridge piers. Further, the clean-up, construction, and painting of murals could act as a series of neighborhood and community events.



Figure 116. Gramatan Underpass Before



Figure 117. Gramatan Underpass After

Site Plan

To achieve our key objectives—Improving Mobility & Access, Establish Sustainability, Creating Active & Inclusive Public Spaces, Providing Diverse Housing Options, and Introducing Retail—we have created a comprehensive site plan as a proposal to create a mixed-use, transit-oriented development that would better serve the community at large.

The overall site, including the Post Office and the West Park Station, is approximately 19 acres. The area that we are proposing to develop approximately 12 acres and would leave the bus station and the post office where they are now. However, we are proposing to reconfigure and develop upon the Post Office's front parking area and reconfigure roadways.

Plaza

First, we are proposing a plaza that would act as the epicenter for the redevelopment. The plaza would be a permeable surface to allow proper rain filtering and have a variety of natural vegetation and smaller trees incorporated throughout. When walking from the West Park Station, transit users will be greeted with small-formatted 2,000 square foot buildings. One will be a convenience store to grab any daily essentials. The other will be a café to act to cater to transit users on-the-go.

The plaza can host a variety of community events, such as farmers markets, live music, health and job fairs, and pop-up retail such as food trucks.

Park

Connected to plaza will be a small park. Within the park, we would propose a playground and other amenities for families. The park space would be vital for new residents within the dense, new development to provide desirable outdoor space. It would also act as an anchor for the community at large and could provide a better waiting environment for transit-users with wait times between connections.

The park and plaza could also have a variety of pass and active amenities. Passive amenities could include comfortable seating areas and improved transit waiting environments active amenities could include a playground, chess tables, and athletic facilities.

Passive Green Space

Having passive green space is vital to keeping the site sustainable. Within these areas we would propose a heavy tree canopy, rain gardens, and other sustainable uses to make the redevelopment ecologically sound.

Parking and Roadways

Our site would aim to have as minimal flat surface parking as possible, and for the parking to be tucked behind the buildings. Ideally, as part of the redevelopment the parking areas we would be comprised of permeable pavers. There would also ideally be a parking garage to accommodate the apartment complexes surrounding the plaza, visitors, and at least 100 spaces for Park-N-Ride users during 6:00AM – 6:00PM. As it is a transit-oriented development, our proposal for parking space would be less than 1 space per unit.

In addition to the parking surfaces, we would reconfigure a roadway and have one main road passing through the development. We would also like to open W. 145th to local traffic, prohibiting large commercial vehicles. Installing traffic calming devices would be vital to control traffic. On non-bus and commercial roadways, the surfaces would ideally be constructed with permeable pavers to continue the concept of minimizing impervious surfaces.

Mixed-Use & Mix-Income

We are proposing 4 mixed-use, mixed-income apartment complexes that would flank the plaza. These apartments would be comprised of 87 affordable apartments, and 117 market rate apartments. The retail would comprise of transit-oriented uses and amenities for residents.

Senior Housing

Our site plan calls for two senior complexes as you're entering the site from Lorain and would be built on the Post Office's front parking area and the green space next to it. We are proposing 43 affordable senior units, and 63 market rate senior units.

Townhomes

As part of the community survey, over 30% of the respondents mentioned a desire for townhomes. The 4 acres that the bus rodeo is now, is a large enough space to accommodate 80 townhomes with a 1-acre park area between. There would be 4 groupings of 4 sets of 5 townhomes, on 4 small drives with no through traffic. The two drives will have connectors to be used in emergency situations only for vehicles such as firetrucks. This townhouse development site would have a gross density of 20 units an acre, which would act as a buff between the surrounding residential areas and the apartments.

Long-Term Proposal

The Post Office building, and back lot comprise of nearly 3 acres. The RTA station comprises of another nearly 3 acres. Long-term, both of these structures could serve as further development sites. This could happen if the Post Office were to be moved elsewhere or incorporated into a smaller space within the overall site. Further, the West Park station has not been updated for more than 20 years. When, and if, RTA decides to update the facility, they could move it and the bus layover area closer to Lorain Ave. If this were to occur, additional housing, retail, public space, and amenities could be created.

Long-Term Proposal

The large site is vastly underutilized, and not in character with the greater West Park neighborhood. It is also not utilizing the strong transit presence. Our final development site would be an ideal scenario, that if implemented over time, could create a more sustainable, and functional transit-oriented subdivision within the West Park neighborhood.

Overall, we are proposing a development that would be approximately 32 units per acre gross, with ample green space and amenities that would be beneficial to a diverse range of users.

Site Layout Renderings



Figure 118. Site Plan without Labels



Figure 119. Site Plan with Labels

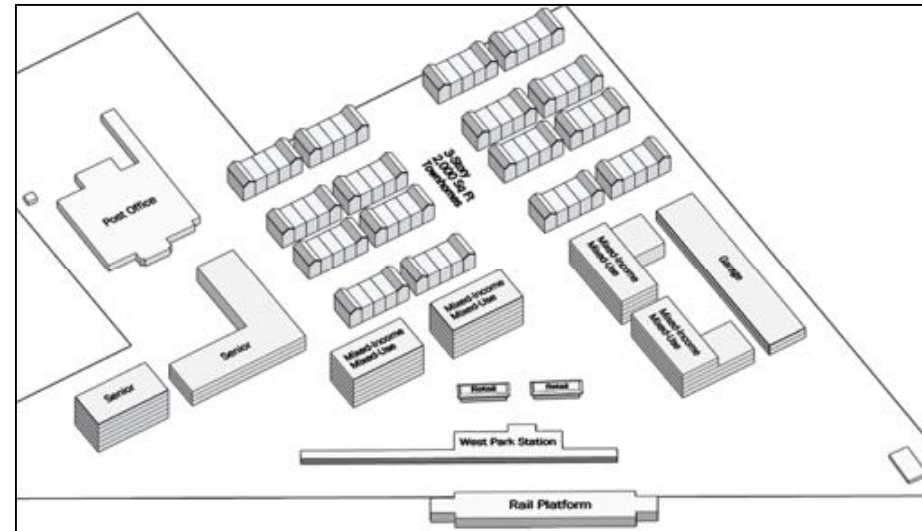


Figure 120. Site Massing

Financing & Public Benefit

The 80 townhomes cost approximately \$229,000 each to construct, resulting in total development costs of \$18.3 million. If sold for \$250,000 each, this provides a return to the developer of \$1.7 million. The 310 apartments cost an average of \$213,000 per unit to construct, the market-rate units being slightly more expensive due to additional luxury materials and amenities, resulting in total development costs of \$66.1 million. If fully leased, the rental units could provide annual rent revenues of nearly \$4.6 million for the developer.

	Market-Rate		Affordable
	Townhouses	Apartments	Apartments
Family			
Total Sq Ft	166,400	105,200	78,200
Units	80	117	87
Rents (monthly)		\$ 1,300	\$ 785
Sales Price	\$ 250,000		
Senior			
Total Sq Ft		56,700	39,100
Units		63	43
Rents (monthly)		\$ 2,000	\$ 785
Development Costs per Sq Ft	\$ 110	\$ 245	\$ 225
Development Costs per Unit	\$ 228,800	\$ 220,500	\$ 202,500
Total Development Costs	\$ 18,304,000	\$ 39,665,500	\$ 26,392,500
Total Sales Revenue	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ -
Annual Rent Revenue	\$ -	\$ 3,335,467	\$ 1,227,740

Figure 121. Revenues

The market-rate components allow the developer a sizeable return. The affordable component will require substantial subsidies to incentivize development. In the Cleveland market,

common subsidies for new affordable housing construction are Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), City HOME, and County HOME funds. Competitive LIHTC pools for which the project would apply are the Urban Opportunity pool and the Senior Urban Housing pool, both of which have a \$1 million tax credit maximum, providing up to \$10 million in equity for the project. City HOME funds, which function as forgivable loans, typically have a \$600,000 per project maximum. County HOME funds typically have a \$450,000 per project cap. Both City and County HOME funds could be obtained for both the affordable and senior affordable buildings, adding up to \$2.1 million in project funding. Combined, LIHTC and HOME funds could cover nearly half of development costs for the affordable component.

The public subsidy afforded to the project is justified by the number of residents and increased tax base brought to the City. Using the average household income in our study area of \$47,334, 390 new households could bring in an additional \$18.5 million in annual household income. Assuming an average of 1.5 people per household, housing on the site could bring in upwards of 585 new residents to Cleveland.

Sustainability

The potential for environmental development at the West Park RTA Station is plentiful. Specifically, including elements of sustainability, by way of green infrastructure, connectivity, and general greening, the value of the neighborhood is able to be capitalized on.

The present conditions of the site are relatively meager, as the rough 12-acre property is mostly asphalt, which provides an opportunity for relatively blank-slate development that incorporates and prioritizes sustainability.

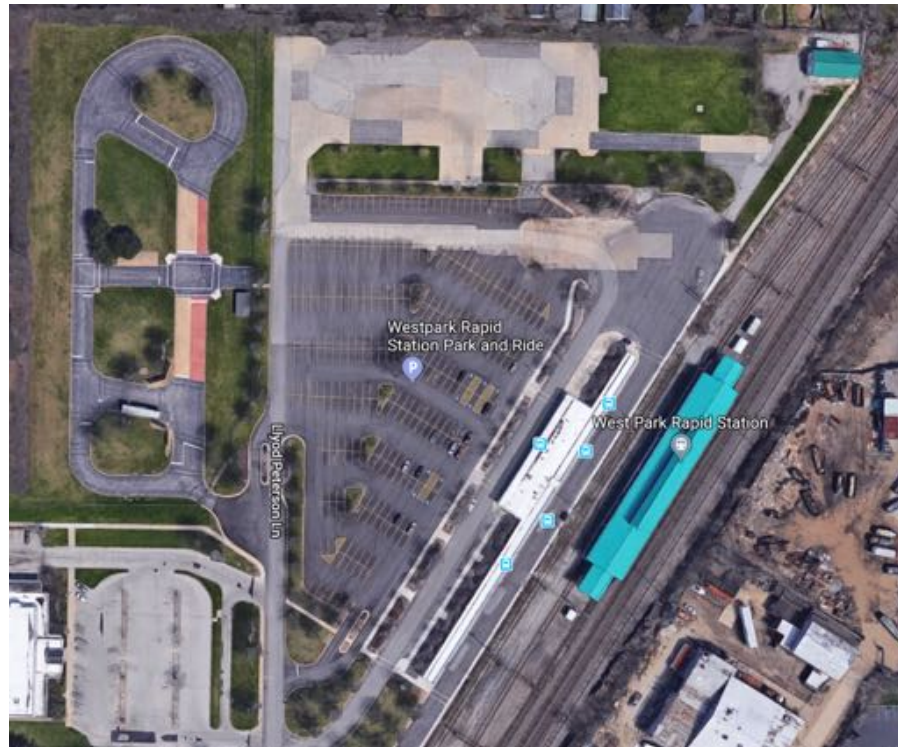


Figure 122. RTA Site Aerial

Current Conditions

In general, and perhaps most notably, the site itself is significantly underutilized. Because of this, there exists a missed opportunity for increased density and diversity of use. In terms of how this affects sustainability and effective concern for the environment as it relates to development efforts, more can be done to create an active space that would engage users and help the environment at the same time.

The effects of such underutilization have impacted the site's capacity to successfully provide for the environment. Specifically, with regard to storm water management, there is an apparent missed opportunity and the chance to incorporate mechanisms that will both help the urban ecosystem and instill the intrinsic values of environmentalism that characterize development today.

Impervious Surfaces

The area is predominately pavement, which lacks the impervious surface area needed to accommodate storm water and effectively mitigate adversarial effects of such runoff and polluting potential. Asphalt does not allow for the proper absorption of rainwater, which can alter the flow of streams. On the same note, in an urban environment, having a landscape that does not adequately, or sufficiently, allow water to infiltrate soil enhances the effects of climate change.

After water spreads across pavement and impervious areas, rather than being absorbed, the water dries quickly, and the effects of the sun and heating potential are greater and more pronounced.⁷⁷ Outside temperatures in these areas are higher, thus being more uncomfortable to all stakeholders (human, animal, biological, etc.).

Lacking Urban Tree Canopy and Heat Island Effect

West Park has the highest tree canopy in the city of Cleveland (about 30% coverage) and the RTA site has little-to-no coverage. (See Figure 123). Because of this, the urban heat island effect is more pronounced, which thereby affects the general temperature and overall comfort of the area.

In terms of the environmental repercussions, lacking shade and tree coverage disproportionately affect the quality of life in an area by increasing the need for energy consumption to combat the effect of hotter temperatures, elevated emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases, which are exacerbated by elevated temperatures, comprised human health and comfort (e.g. Hotter and less desirable), and impaired water quality⁷⁸.

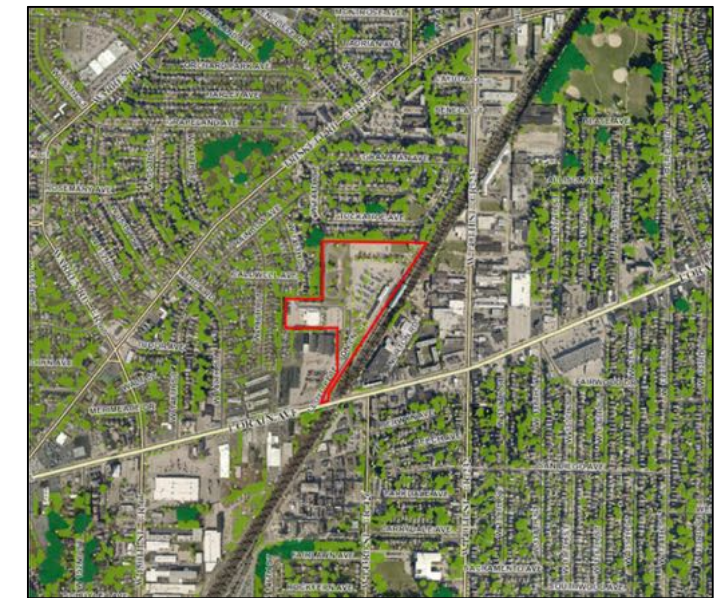


Figure 123. Urban Tree Canopy Coverage in West Park and RTA Station Site (Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, 2019)

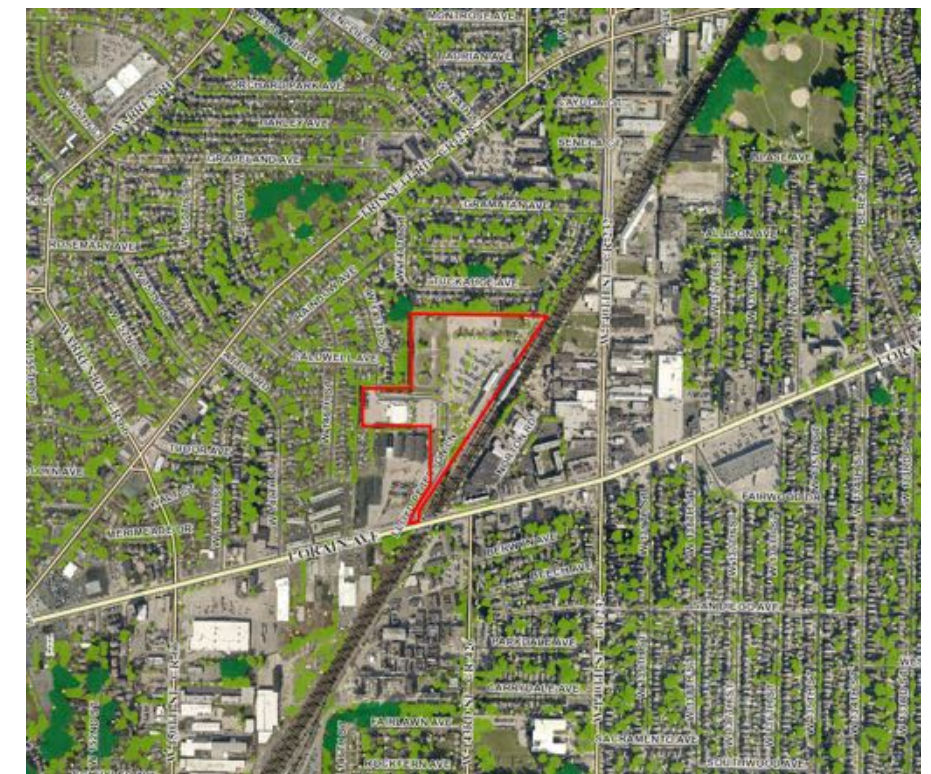


Figure 124. Site Location (image courtesy of Google Maps, 2019)

⁷⁷ Capital Regional District. *Impervious Surfaces* retrieved from: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/education/our-environment/concerns/impervious-surfaces>

⁷⁸ <https://www.epa.gov/heat-islands>

Lacking Connectivity

The insular street network of the residential areas abutting the West Park RTA Station (Tuckahoe, Rainbow, and Gramatan roads) make movement between and among the station area limited and difficult. (See Figure 126).

Limitations on general mobility and movement between areas create unsustainable land-use patterns that are often exclusionary and not conducive efficiency.

According to the Congress for New Urbanism, further analysis of less-connected street networks shows a decrease in multi-modal transportation potential and overall reliability of movement.⁷⁹ The residential area to the west of the station has no points of direct connection or access to the station, which affects the ability of persons to use and enjoy the space as a more sustainable means of transportation.

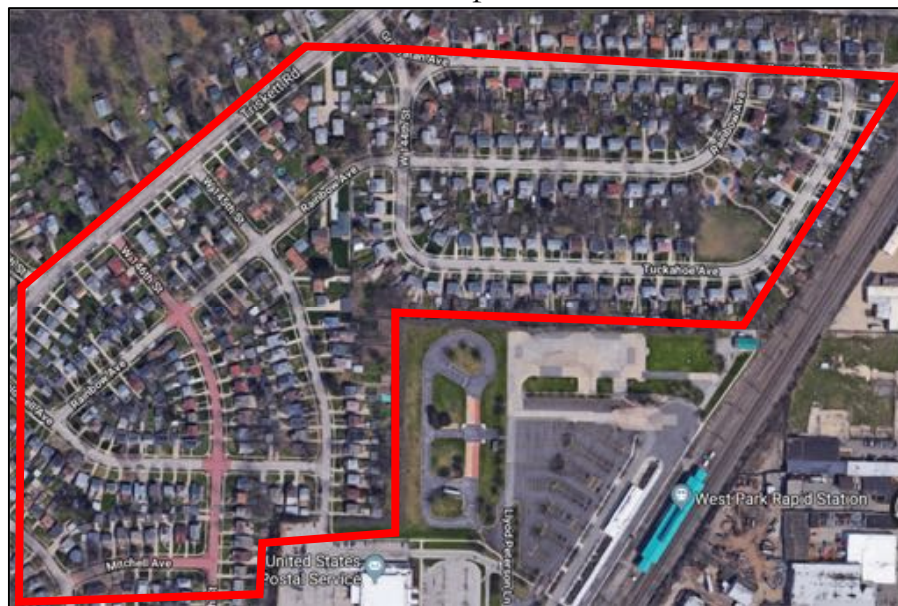


Figure 125. Residential Area Abutting West Park RTA Station – Outlined in red (image courtesy of Google Maps, 2019)

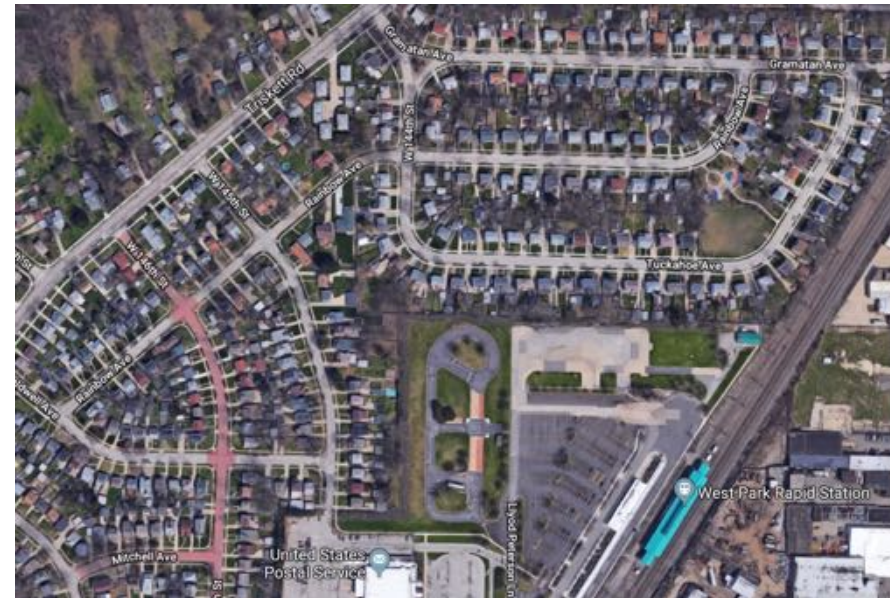


Figure 126. Site and Surrounding Neighborhoods (image courtesy of Google Maps, 2019)

Unsustainable Mobility Patterns

Similar to the lacking connectivity of the street network adjacent to the station, the West Park neighborhood has an overall unsustainable mobility pattern. 80-90% of people within the identified census tract for the neighborhood rely on their automobile, despite being at the intersection of six transit routes (buses and the RTA station). In tandem with the lack of access points to the station, as a result of a more insular street network system, the opportunity to engage different modes of transit that are less harmful to the environment (buses, trains, bikes, etc.) these present mobility patterns work against sustainability initiatives.

Proposed Redevelopment

In assessing the aforementioned conditions presented, the most important piece of development for the West Park RTA station rests in creating a space that is functional, enjoyable, dynamic, and environmental – above all else. The opportunity

for effective placemaking and even more efficient use of the site allows these goals to be realized.

There are three major categories of redevelopment that cater to these values:

- establishing an urban tree canopy and significant tree coverage in the area,
- incorporating elements of green infrastructure, and
- general greening.

The entirety of the redevelopment plan for the site provides for the density and distribution of amenities and means of enjoyment that will ultimately bridge the gap between missed environmentalism and the call to sustainability that is desperately needed. Research from Vibrant Cities Lab (2019) asserts that “quality green space can build stronger neighborhoods and stronger social connections.”⁸⁰ This is the penultimate of the West Park RTA Station redevelopment proposal.

Establishing an Urban Tree Canopy

In order to create cohesion with the rest of the neighborhood and capitalize on the tree coverage of West Park, establishing a robust urban tree canopy at the West Park RTA Station is a major element of redevelopment efforts. To do this, simply planting trees throughout and intentionally to creating shaded areas will help with this goal.

The area will be characterized by greenery and appropriate foliage that will help to mitigate temperature increases. This will directly affect the sites own influence on climate change and provide a deeper level of comfort for users and residents.

General urban forestry efforts have the potential to positively affect human health, economic development, water quality, air quality, equity, education, and general city planning.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Congress for New Urbanism. *Street Networks 101* retrieved from: <https://www.cnu.org/our-projects/street-networks/street-networks-101>

⁸⁰ <https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/human-health/>

⁸¹ Vibrant Cities Lab. *Urban Forestry Toolkit* retrieved from: <https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/resources/urban-forests-case-studies-challenges-potential-and-success-in-a-dozen-cities/>



Figure 127. Street-Lined Urban Tree Canopy (image courtesy of Tree Pennsylvania, 2019)

Green Infrastructure

Efficient storm water management is critical to neighborhood and community livelihood and vitality. Proper storm water management helps eliminate the effects and possibility of pollutants, erosion, and flooding in an area. In general, having permeable surfaces at the site will help eliminate the adverse effect of storm water runoff. Other elements of green infrastructure that will be included at the West Park RTA Station to ease the effects of storm water are:

- bioswale placement
- constructing rain gardens.



Figure 128. Bioswale (image courtesy of Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, 2019)



Figure 129. Permeable Surface (image courtesy of Philly Watersheds, 2019)

Along with including permeable surfaces throughout the site, bioswales and rain gardens will also help absorb rain water. This provides an opportunity for ecosystem management through proper maintenance and restoration of natural hydrology.

Other added benefits of green infrastructure are as follows⁸²:

- Pollination
- Air quality, water flow, and climate regulation (carbon sequestration)
- Erosion protection
- Enhanced biodiversity
- Maintenance of soil quality and structure
- Water purification

All of these direct benefits of green infrastructure will be captured in proposed redevelopment of the RTA station.

General Greening

This particular element of sustainable redevelopment includes creating active green space and parks, having trash cans and

recycling throughout, connector streets to the residential neighborhood to improve movement, and overall redevelopment based on increasing density and more efficient use of the site.



Figure 130. Solar Compacting Trash Cans (image courtesy of Washington University in St Louis, 2019)

Conclusion

Sustainable development is an extremely important piece of the West Park RTA Station puzzle. Because the site is largely empty and vacant (not many buildings and mostly pavement/parking space), the opportunity to include and engage elements of environmentalism are plentiful.

Triskett Park Subdivision

Duplex Rehabilitation

Despite the doubts with the homes in the Triskett Park Subdivision being nearly 75 years old on average age and many of the houses in need of rehab, there's plenty of help they can receive to stay relevant. The Cleveland Restoration Society has a program in which homes over 50 years old can qualify for

⁸² Minnesota Stormwater Manual (May 2018). *Multiple benefits of green infrastructure and role of green infrastructure in sustainability and ecosystem services.*

beautification and historic rehab. The program is called the Heritage Home Program and can benefit the homeowners and the community.

“The Heritage Home Program offers a range of services that help repair, maintain, and rehab your older home, while retaining architectural features and increasing your home’s value.” (Cleveland Restoration, 2019). Even a two family, half duplex colonial built in 1945 can be beautified and the value in monetary, physical form can be a long-term benefit.

- Technical Services: services that help repair, maintain, and rehab your older home, while retaining architectural features and increasing your home’s value
- Loan Program: fixed-low interest financing to assist homeowners in rehabilitation projects for their older homes (1.4% Interest)
- Workshops: educational workshops that address your home maintenance and rehab issues
- Homeowner Gallery: success stories and "before" and "after" photos of previous projects (Cleveland Restoration)

Phasing/Implementation

Below is the Gantt chart, for the first two years of the project, that shows every phase up until the actual construction period. We chose to stick with two years because the construction period could be significantly longer. The real “x” factor in this would be the number of developers that get involved with the project. If there’s just one developer, the project would be faster, possibly 2-3 years. The more developers split up the various aspects (senior, apartments, townhomes, etc.), the more drawn out the process would become, more like 5-10 years.

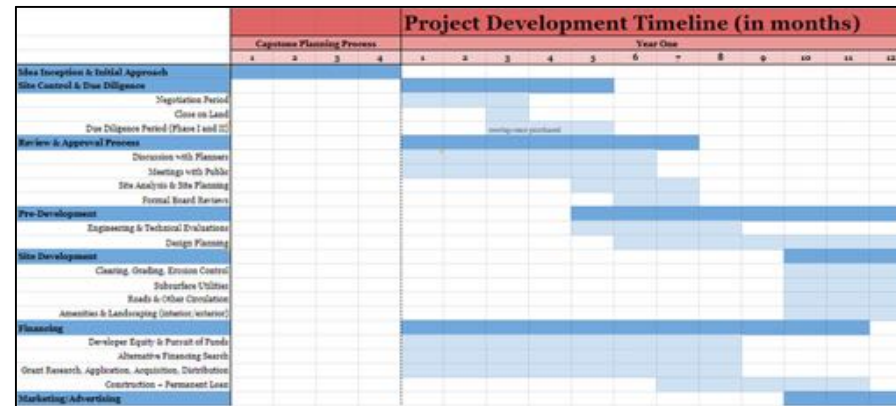


Figure 131. Gantt Year 1

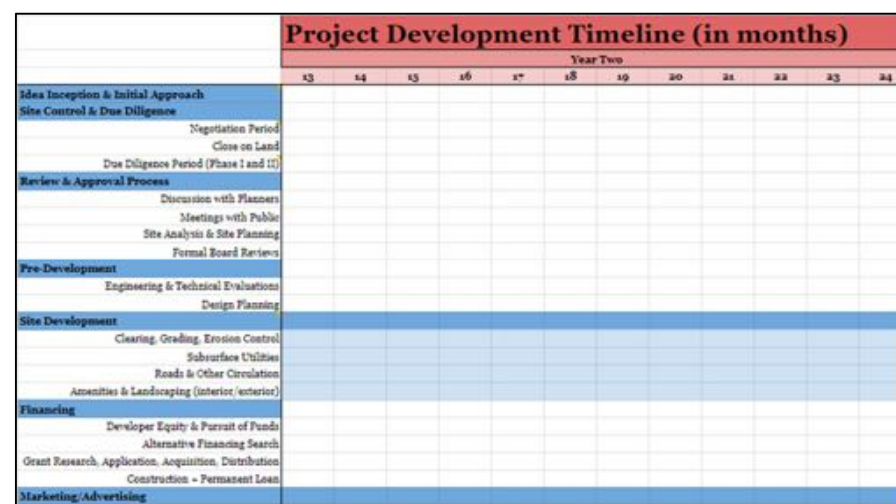


Figure 132. Gantt Year 2

As mentioned earlier, the construction period could vary widely but we propose that the following order is best. Specifically, townhomes would be best to construct first so that cash flows can start as soon as possible and the RTA Parking Garage would need to be built before any construction alters the existing lot.

Physical Site Development
Townhomes
Phase I
Phase II
RTA Parking Garage
Mixed-Income Apartments
Retail 1
Retail 2
Apartment Complex 1
Apartment Complex 2
Plaza Area w/ Retail
Senior Apartments
Green Infrastructure
Bioswales
Rain Gardens
Tree Canopy
Playground
Dog Park

Figure 133. Construction Priorities

Obstacles

There are several hypothetical obstacles that we foresee could arise during the life of this project:

- Negotiations with RTA would be crucial. They would need to commit to moving the bus rodeo, selling the land for a reasonable cost, and generally approve of the new site plan, especially with parking moving a bit further away from the station.
- Coordinating with developers and builders will likely be the biggest challenge. With such a large site, and multiple aspects (townhomes, apartments, senior, etc.), the timeline may vary considerably. Will there be an overall project manager that steers each developer? Who will be that person/team?
- Putting together the capital stack will depend on the project director and/or each individual developer. Some

financial partners may only want to fund specific parts of the project (senior only, etc.).

- Since the environmental conditions are unknown, there could be obstacles with soil quality, etc.
- Designing new street connections could be challenging.
- The “x” factor in all of this, will be the neighborhood’s receptiveness to the project. Opposition movements could pose a threat to development.

Conclusion: Looking Forward

Our plan for the West Park station and its vicinity is a multifaceted concept to improve the quality of life for the neighborhood. Our main strategy is to leverage the untapped potential of the transit station in pursuit of sustainability, economic vitality, and equity. The station and its surrounding land use is outdated in style and function. Many commented in our outreach process that the station area lacks quality “green space”, feels “old”, and unsafe; these perceptual shortcomings, along with physical isolation, repel activity, leading to the absence of any sense of place. The absence of space repels further activity in a vicious cycle. While there is the unique amenity of direct, affordable, car-less access to the largest employment hub in the state of Ohio (Downtown Cleveland) and an international airport, the station area lacks vital spatial and social connections to the neighborhood. We seek to address this through our framework of possible housing, neighborhood retail, mobility, and public space improvements, which are bold yet entirely within the realm of possibility.

Our proposal can be summarized as a ring of denser, transit-oriented development radiating out from a station plaza into townhouses and the existing stable single-family neighborhoods adjacent to the site. Our housing vision is informed by the strong mid-range housing market and demand for accommodating new global Clevelanders. Our transportation ideas are designed to create smooth transitions and connections that respect both the value of the station, its

current and future users, and the more suburban nature of the adjacent neighborhoods. At the moment, the area around the station goes dark at night, but a future West Park station is one that lights up with intuitive, multi-use paths that see more activity throughout the day and night. Perhaps community events will take place in the plaza area, or children will be playing. The security concerns in the neighborhood can be addressed not only through peaceful unarmed patrols, but through increased casual supervision in the form of more regular and diverse activity.

Within the context of the larger study area, West Park station could be a portal to other neighborhoods and perhaps one day a transitory haven, a spot to stop for coffee on the way Downtown.

Lorain Ave. Corridor

Existing Conditions

The Lorain Ave. Corridor site is .7 miles long and consists of both Lorain Ave. itself, as well as the majority of buildings and parcels along the north and south sides of the street, with the exception of the large vacant Kmart Site at W. 150th St. Site boundaries are the intersection of W. 157th St. and Lorain Ave. to the west near the library and the railroad overpass at Lloyd Petersen Ln. and Lorain Ave. to the east.



Figure 134. Lorain Ave Site (Viking Planning Group)

In order to present the recommendations for this segment of the plan in a clear and concise manner, the site has been broken up into five components: 1) the Civic Node; 2) Lorain Ave. Retail; 3) Streetscape; 4) W. 147th St./ Kamden Village; and 5) the former Harley Davidson/City Service Center site.

Civic Node

Moving west to east through the site, the Civic Node serves as an important landmark in the landscape. The collection of parcels at the intersection of W. 157th St. and Lorain Ave. includes the West Park branch of the Cleveland Public Library, City of Cleveland Fire Station #39, the Fairview West Park Center office building, a healthcare training facility owned by the Cleveland Clinic, and the West Park-Fairview Family YMCA, which includes an open green space used for Y sports programs. The library and fire station were built before the 1930’s, while the training building and YMCA were constructed in 1957 and 1958, respectively. This site in particular serves as a functional and visual gateway to West Park as many residents feel that the neighborhood starts here and continues westward to Kamm’s Corners.

Lorain Ave. Retail

Continuing on east, the retail along Lorain Ave. focuses heavily on auto parts stores, used car lots, and repair shops. Tradewinds and J.D. Byrider, the two major used auto dealers on the corridor, occupy both the south and north sides of Lorain Ave. (Figure 135). These parcels contain multiple buildings per businesses as well as large parking lots for spill-over. Other notable auto-oriented businesses include White's Wheels, Toyo Tires, Victory Engines, a Shell Gas Station, and Triumph Motorcycles. A new laundromat with a café component, the Wash House & Café, opened in Feb. 2019 in the front of Glass Block Headquarters, a window-replacement business occupying the original John Marshall High School building. The 4,300 SF laundry/café concept is a welcome investment in and addition to the neighborhood and suggests how more of the surrounding properties might be retro-fit for the neighborhood's present-day needs.

Other notable buildings include: the tall Bilco building, a brick 7-story storage facility; the Illuminating Co.'s substation anchoring the corner of W. 150th St.; and the Corrigan Craciun Funeral Home, which occupies two buildings on either side of W. 148th St. There is a large vacant building adjacent to the funeral home, most recently a car dealership, which offers about 22,000 SF of building on a 1.5 acre multi-parcel site. The combined site was rezoned in 2013 for General Retail, and has been marketed for redevelopment, but would likely still require some environmental remediation.



Figure 135. Existing Conditions in the Civic Node and along Lorain Ave. (Viking Planning Group)

Streetscape

While sidewalks along this stretch of Lorain Ave. are in good condition overall, there are nearly 40 curb cuts disrupting the pedestrian experience. Additionally, besides a handful of mature trees on the front lawns of the library and YMCA, there are fewer than 10 street trees, all of them young and recently planted, to provide shade and noise dampening; there are zero street trees along the concentration of used auto dealers between the YMCA and W. 150th St.

The street itself has four travel lanes and a center turn-lane west of W. 150th St and three travel lanes and a center turn lane to the east. Whereas a bike lane stretches between W. 150th St and the railroad overpass on the south side of Lorain, it ends abruptly at W. 147th St. on the north side. Finally, “slip” lanes have been added for right-turning vehicles at both the Triskett Rd. and W. 105th St. intersections, making pedestrian crossing distances unusually wide.



Figure 136. Existing Conditions along Lorain Ave. (Viking Planning Group)

Kamden Village

Kamden Village Apartments are a unique residential space in the study area and are currently the only higher-density option along the corridor, offering 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Built in 1962, there are six two-story buildings with garden apartments on site, offering a total of 216 units (Figure 137). Kamden Village offers a more affordable housing option than much of the surrounding area. Rents vary; a one-bedroom apartment is around \$579 per month. Amenity-wise, there is a small outdoor swimming pool, but very limited green space. While there are ample and often underutilized parking lots surrounding the site, vacancies are generally low, under 5%, which suggests that many of the residents do not own cars.

Service Garage Site

The final cluster along Lorain Ave. is just west of the railroad overpass and Lloyd Petersen Ln., the entrance to the West Park RTA Station. Numerous buildings occupy this group of parcels at 14550 Lorain Ave.: the former Harley Davidson dealership building totals 56,000 SF: a vacant 6,000 SF showroom; a vacant 2,500 SF office space; and a 48,000 SF warehouse that is partially occupied by a Mediterranean food distribution

company. Surrounding the buildings is ample space for parking.

The property owner, who operates the Mediterranean food business in back, has tentative plans to expand the concept to a retail Mediterranean grocery in the showroom space fronting Lorain Ave.

The back (north) half of the site is the long-time site of a City of Cleveland Service Center, operated by the Dept. of Public Works as a street maintenance facility. The city currently operates two open-air salt/gravel sheds and a 20,000 square foot warehouse/garage on about four acres of land. Trucks are currently using the right-of-way through the building's front parking lot to access the space. The City of Cleveland leases this space on an annual basis.

The final space on this site is the lower-right parcel at the corner of Lorain and Lloyd Peterson Ln., currently leased to a used car dealer and a visual “gateway” to the West Park RTA Station. This sub-parcel is at a significantly lower grade than the rest of the site and is adjacent to the low-lying, flood-prone area under the railroad tracks. At .6 acres, the site contains two small buildings, a 600 SF office and a 1,600 SF service garage and has space to park about 100 cars.



Figure 137. Existing Conditions: Kamden Village and the Service Garage (Viking Planning Group)

Proposed Site Concept

The Lorain Ave. Corridor Site is long and serves as an important connector, not only to the civic node and the service garage site, but also has the potential to better connect into the west side of West Park and the Kamm’s Corners area. Survey results from residents reaffirmed this notion, with a strong desire for a more walk and bicycle friendly environment. Some specifics include, green space, improved storefronts, flowers, trees, lighting, and more signage. There was also a desire to reduce the number of vacancies and bring in new retailers that were not bars or automobile dealerships.

Given the public feedback, semi-structured interviews, and working sessions among the planning team, the following concept is proposed:

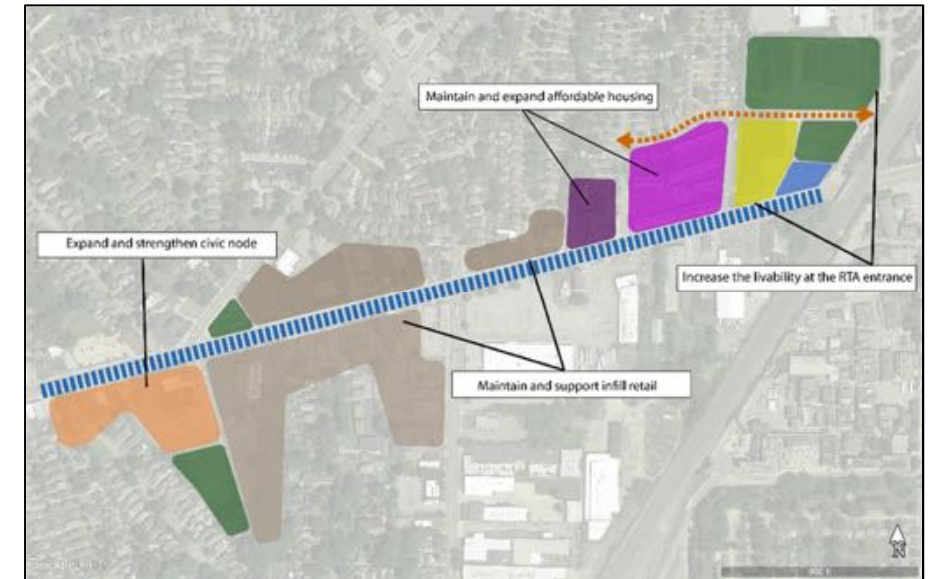


Figure 138. Proposed Site Concept Diagram (Viking Planning Group)

Starting with the orange civic node and moving west to east along the corridor, the recommendation is to secure the orange site as the civic node, driving all similar uses to the location. This includes supporting the existing resources, such as the library and the YMCA. The dark green triangle north of Lorain Ave. and south of the civic node represent green spaces that should be acquired or maintained to increase livability of the site. Moving east, the light grey/brown spaces represent infill retail. In order to work in union with the proposals of the Kmart site, existing retail will need to be supported, and infill retail sought out. The dark purple and light purple squares north of Lorain are housing uses. The darker purple is new mixed-use development on the corner of W. 147th St. and the lighter purple is the maintenance of affordable housing and rental options. Finally reaching the end of the site, the yellow represents ethnic food wholesale/retail, while the green represents public green space, and the small blue polygon represents storm water solutions, like rain gardens.

The blue dashed line over Lorain indicates the need to make street improvements that support all modes of transportation, while the dashed orange line that runs through the service garage site represents a pedestrian walkway that will extend

Bartter St. into the new development near the RTA station and the service garage site.

Site Recommendations

In-depth recommendations and analyses of sites are explored below.

The Civic Node

The Civic Node serves as one of the strongest existing sites in the entire study area. With strong partnerships and a clear purpose, the institutions within the West Park Civic Node breathe life into their shared public space and create a vibrant and cohesive district. The fully realized civic node proclaims the mission and identity of its institutions for all to see, so that the space becomes a forum for public expression and a source of community pride.

To maintain previous success and continue to grow, it is recommended that the site make physical changes that increase access to users and bring life to Lorain Ave.

Recommendation 1: Work with the existing businesses to re-orient the entrances of each existing building to Lorain Ave, instead of keep foot and bike traffic tucked away behind the corridor itself. Our streets have a significant responsibility to be accessible to all, and to be functional, safe, and attractive places to walk. Both the West Park Library and YMCA utilize their front entrances which is often an inconvenience for pedestrian who are utilizing the Lorain Corridor. A reworked front entry, including curb cuts and a relocated handicap ramp, would go a long way to giving the civic node a “facelift” and rebuild communities trust and utilization of these institutions.

Recommendation 2: The civic node is currently dealing with a need for more parking at the library and underutilization at the YMCA. A shared parking lot would make spaces accessible rather than reserved for a particular group. The recommendation is to consolidate existing parking lots and parking lot entrances behind the existing buildings in order to reduce the number of curb cuts currently along Lorain Ave and

the risk for crashes. This may mean that the entire lot or part of the lot is open for public use, or that the lot is publicly available for certain hours or days of the week. These types of stipulations may vary by facility and need. Multiple curb cuts along the corridor are often a major source of conflict points for auto collision or pedestrian injury, and providing pedestrian access in the front of the node and vehicle entrance in the rear reduces the barrier effect that parking lots can have within a neighborhood. There is an opportunity leverage the existing Cleveland Public Library Community Vision Plan for the West Park Branch which has specific design improvements that are in the early phases of implementation. Leveraging that plan in relation to the civic node recommendations create a larger impact on the area as a whole.

Recommendation 3: After analyzing the finding from the surveys and interview there is an overwhelming need for more green space within the area. Greenspace promotes prosperity by stimulating interest in a neighborhood, raising nearby property values, which benefits both owners and the local government. The economic benefits of creating this green space would be an increased tax base which could pay for the improvements as well as generate revenues in excess of these costs. Excess revenue could then be used to develop other municipal amenities. It would be ideal to acquire the tip of the triangular lot between Triskett Rd. and Lorain Ave., which is currently owned by Trade winds and has a Market Value of \$126,000. The space is highly visible and currently underutilized which is why it should be explored as additional green space for the public to use and enjoy, bringing the social cohesion of the civic node across Lorain Ave.

Recommendation 4: Further building upon the community’s desire for more green space redevelopment of a portion of the parking lot between the Fire Department and the YMCA into a public plaza. The front lot could be redesigned into a green plaza reading area with seating, lighting, colorful elements, and gateway signage indicating the presence of the Civic Node as a

community resource and inviting in West Park residents and visitors.

Recommendation 5: As mentioned in the Kmart Development recommendations there may be an opportunity to consolidate and move the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) that currently exists on W. 150th St. to the civic node. The VFW and the West Park Historical Society have the potential to combine into one building, sharing a space that can serve each entity needs. The recommendation is to move both entities into the existing Masonic Temple, which is currently not in use. The opportunity would allow the 4,800 SF to be leased to the VFW \$24,000/year (\$10/SF NNN) and \$36,000/year (\$15/SF NNN) to the historical society.



Figure 139. Illustrative Site Plan for the Civic Node
(Viking Planning Group)

Lorain Ave. Streetscape

The stretch of Lorain Ave. within the study area is .7 miles long. To increase mobility along this segment for all road users, automobiles, bicyclists, and pedestrians, the recommendation is to make both on street changes to the striping and curbs, as well as add in amenities that improve the space.

Recommendation 1: Extend the road diet west into the Kamm's Corners streetscape to create continuous on-road bicycle infrastructure. There are multiple options for a road diet, given the 53 feet of space curb-to-curb along Lorain Ave. Concept A includes one-way bike lanes on either side of the road (6 feet wide), that can be buffered or protected (4 feet wide). The remaining space should be used for three lanes of travel, one each way (10 feet wide) and a shared turning lane (12 feet wide).



Figure 140. Concept A Road Diet (Viking Planning Group)

Concept B is to maintain four travel lanes, one westbound lane (11 feet wide), one turning lane (11 feet wide), one eastbound lane (10 feet wide), and one parking lane (10 feet wide). This still leaves space for a two-way cycle track (10 feet wide total) and a protected buffer (3 feet wide). This concept may transition well from the proposed midway cycle track along Lorain Ave. near the Ohio City area, just a few miles east.



Figure 141. Concept B Cycle Track (Viking Planning Group)

While there is no average daily trips (ADT) data available for this exact section of Lorain Ave. we can draw some inferences from nearby roads. In 2014, the ADT on Triskett Rd. was about 7,000, in 2017 the ADT on W. 150th St. was about 21,000, and in 2017 the ADT on Lorain Ave. near Fairview Hospital was about 15,000.⁸³ According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), roads with ADTs between 15,000 and 20,000 are good candidates for road diets, and roads with over 20,000 still have potential, but require additional feasibility studies.⁸⁴ Given the current information, pursuing the road diet of cycle track options will require further analysis and a feasibility study to ensure no major detrimental effects on traffic.



Figure 142. Photo rendering of streetscape changes (Viking Planning Group)

Recommendation 2: Improve the intersection at the W. 150th with bump-outs and shortened crossing distances to increase pedestrian comfort and safety. The current space for turning onto W. 150th St. is wide, while the pedestrian space on the adjacent sidewalk/curb is limited. With potential

improvements to the Kmart site that will attract additional foot traffic, and the fast-food options on W. 150th St., increase walkability can be achieved through the balance of road users and space, especially at one of the most populous intersections in the study area.

Recommendation 3: Install covered bus stop shelters and bicycle racks at the 7 stops in the study area. The West Park Station serves as a major transportation hub on the west side, with many connections, for both the red line and the busses being made. There are an additional 7 stops (four west bound and three east bound) within the study area. Installing basic bus shelters will provide safer and more visible places for residents and visitors using public transportation. Bus shelters may also present an opportunity for more artistic, street enhancing amenities as well, with a good local example being the metal bus structures installed in the Gordon Square Arts District along Detroit Ave. All bus shelters should be installed in tandem with bicycle racks that allow for users to complete the first and last mile of their trips. Bicycle racks at bus stops may increase utilization of transit because users have increased access to stops when combining trips with bicycles.

Recommendation 4: Increase street tree canopy. While the corridor does have some street trees, they are limited to the civic node and the Kamden Village apartments. The city and the CDC should continue to plant trees along the corridor to reduce traffic noise, increase shade, and improve the pedestrian scale of the street.

Recommendation 5: Consolidate curb cuts. The numerous curb cuts, or places where the curb ends to allow for a driveway, increase opportunities for crashes between pedestrians, cars, and bicycles. Users on the sidewalks must be under constant alert to watch for cars using the curb cuts. Reducing the number of crash opportunities, while expanding the continuous sidewalk will provide a more comfortable walking

⁸³ NOACA GIS Portal. (2019). Retrieved from <https://gis.noaca.org/Portal/>

⁸⁴ Federal Highway Administration. (2014). *Road Diet Informational Guide*, FHWA-SA-14-028 Washington, DC.

experience for the public. Increased comfort may result in increased use.

Recommendation 6: New construction should be built out to the sidewalk and any parking lots should be behind the buildings. The Lorain Ave. corridor site does not contain many new construction recommendations, but for the limited number of new construction opportunities, developers should be encouraged to construct up to the sidewalk, creating more density along Lorain Ave. and reduce open gaps for rogue cars. In addition, new parking lots should be behind buildings in order to reduce the space that the public has to travel to reach a storefront. This may increase retail visits.

Recommendation 7: Invest in way-finding and branding signage along the corridor. The final streetscape recommendation may also be the “low-hanging fruit” due to both low-cost and high-impact. Way-finding signage will help visitors and residents to better navigate the space and potentially opt for walking or bicycling instead of driving when it comes to visiting the library or catching a train. Signage may include directions to popular destinations, or travel times by active transportation modes that inform residents and visitors of the proximity of resources within the space, and nearby. In addition to way finding, branding will play a vital role in the identity of the space. Surveys indicated that many do not identify the study area as West Park, and therefore greater efforts are needed to bridge the gap between Kamm’s Corners and the rest of West Park. Branding with signage or pole banners can help residents and visitors to form connections and new ideas about what spaces are a part of West Park. It will be important to carry out branding through the neighborhood in order to create a united and specific identity that not only unites residents but also draws in visitors.

The streetscape changes are flexible and can be pursued at the level of resources available to the neighborhood at any given time. The table below shows approximate costs of the streetscape elements mentioned above.^{85,86}

Street Element	Estimated Cost
Curb Extensions at W. 150th St.	\$ 50,000.00
Road Diet (resurface and restripe)	\$ 36,800.00
Road Diet (restripe only)	\$ 80,000.00
Bus Shelters (ea.)	\$ 5,500.00
Bike Rack (ea.)	\$ 500.00
Street Tree (ea.)	\$ 150.00
Wayfinding Sign (ea.)	\$ 300.00
Pole Banner Sign (ea.)	\$ 175.00

Figure 143. Cost Estimates for Streetscape
(Viking Planning Group)

Lorain Ave. Retail

The retail landscape along Lorain Ave. has a very specific character, and thrives in the automobile sales and services industry. In order to embrace the history of what is old and welcome in the new, Lorain Ave. retail recommendations are a mix of maintenance, with a sprinkling of new potential space.

Recommendation 1: Support existing retail and infill or new retail. The current corridor can attract visitors in niche retail, with the investment by Triumph motorcycles and the continued anchoring of places like White’s Wheel Aligning Services, the momentum and cost of doing a complete 180 and pursuing new retail would be futile. As for the current vacancies, new infill should be pursued. Specialty retailers, such as books stores, record stores, and clothing may be able to thrive. Generally, bars and additional automobile-oriented

businesses should be avoided due to the already overwhelming existence of these retail types.

Recommendation 2: Look for opportunities to create local landmarks. With the historically automobile focused nature of the corridor, highlighting local businesses through for their unique presence and aesthetic can assist in growing a sense of place. For example, classic and vintage signs, such as White’s Wheel Service, should be incorporated into the streetscape in order to add to the sense of place. Having “local landmarks” not only gives character to the street, but also adds way-finding value that helps residents and visitors know where they are along the corridor.

Kamden Village Apartments

On the east side of the W. 147th St. is a large affordable multi-family apartment complex named Kamden Village Apartments. With 216 1- and 2-bedroom units in 6 buildings, the complex is almost completely leased up at over 99% occupancy. The complex has been brought up many times throughout the planning process from stakeholders, community members, and residents. While the apartments themselves need improvements and updates, we really wanted to address the complex by asking, how can we improve quality of life for residents as well as integrate the multi-family complex with the rest of the neighborhood?

⁸⁵ NOACA. (2019). *Implementation Activities*. Retrieved from <https://www.noaca.org/community-assistance-center/funding-programs/transportation-for-livable-communities-initiative-tlci/implementation-activities>

⁸⁶ Federal Highway Administration. (2014). *Road Diet Informational Guide*, FHWA-SA-14-028 Washington, DC.



Figure 144. Aerial of Kamden (Google)

A practical approach would be to work with Kamden Village owner to determine incremental investments. Is it possible to upgrade unit by unit or even or building-by-building? Because vacancy is so low, it seems like this approach would be preferable as to a complete demolition/reconstruction.

There is also a need for new green space for not only the residents of Kamden, but the surrounding area as a whole. There is a possibility to create new green space or gardens by removing underutilized parking. Another way to create connectivity to West Park Station and proposed green space is to open up Bartter Ave., the slightly curved road parallel to Lorain Ave. just north of the complex.

Metro Toyota Site

On the west side sits a former Metro Toyota dealership. This is a 26,500 SF vacant building with immediate potential for new retail/commercial space. The parcels have been recently rezoned as local retail business. However, there would still need to be quite a bit of remediation work on the site before a new use moved in.

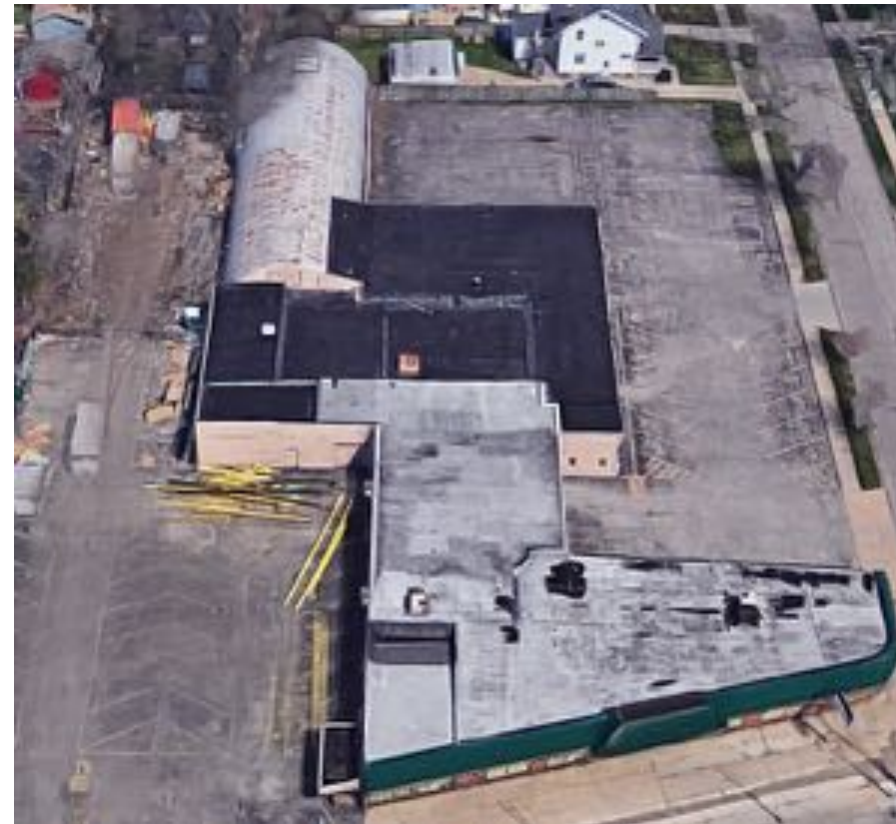


Figure 145. Aerial of Metro Toyota Building (Google)

We came up with two potential development options for the old Metro Toyota site. First, The Hope Center is an invaluable community asset that offers English, GED, and citizenship courses to the existing and new immigrant and refugee community members (among other great programs and resources that they provide). Often times resettled refugees have a certain skill set/educations background in a variety of disciplines, however they may not have the licensure or accreditation stateside. Because of this there’s a real opportunity to create a new workforce arm of to help with these barriers. Another potential use would be to create and international food hub/incubator in the space. By partnering with immigrants and refugees, we can build economic opportunity, create a collaborative environment, and share/learn about different cultures through food. Successful examples of this exist across the country, so it is a model that could be replicated here in Cleveland. Possible community

programming could include cooking classes, demonstrations, and “dinner parties.”

There is also potential for a future mixed-use development project at this site. Based off of the low vacancy rate at the Kamden paired with the findings from the housing gap analysis, there is a demand for affordable housing in the study area. With a large site footprint, it is possible to demolish the former Metro Toyota and construct new 5 story, 100-unit mixed-use development. Figure 147 displays the financial analysis.



Figure 146. Potential Future Development, Source: The Richman Group of California Development Co.

	Affordable	Market-Rate	Retail
	Apartments	Apartments	Incubator/Workforce
Family			
Total Sq Ft	60,000	30000	22,500
Units	67	33	2
Rents (monthly)	\$ 785	1300	\$ 112,500 (\$10/SF NNN)
Sales Price			
Development Costs per Sq Ft	\$ 225	245	\$ 110
Development Costs per Unit	\$ 202,500	220500	\$ 1,237,500
Total Development Costs	\$13,500,000	7350000	\$ 2,475,000
Total Sales Revenue	\$ -	0	
Annual Rent Revenue	\$ 628,000	520000	\$ 225,000

Figure 147. Financial Analysis for Apartment Development (Viking Planning Group)

Former Harley Site / City Service Center

The size and location of the former Harley Davidson site offers the neighborhood a major opportunity for enhanced livability, connectivity and sustainability. The study team has

four primary recommendations for this site, which are laid out conceptually in Figure 148.

Recommendation 1: Work with the new owner to open a retail/wholesale international grocery store with eat-in dining options in the former Harley showroom. In the short-term, as much support as possible should be provided to get the grocery concept off the ground. If well-executed, the market would be a major attraction for the immediate neighborhood, as the niche market analysis suggests, but also has the potential to be a regional draw.

Given the high demand for restaurants in the neighborhood – evident again in both the niche market analysis and the patron surveys – adding an eat-in dining component should be explored. Doing so adds the potential for the site to become a new gathering place for the community, of which few exist along this section of Lorain.



Figure 148. Harley Site/City Service Center Site Plan
(Viking Planning Group)

Specialty ethnic markets which combine groceries and casual dining exist on the West Side and a fact-finding tour of these places with KCDC staff to generate ideas, check out any potential competition and help refine the concept is a good next step. Some close-by markets to visit include La Plaza Supermarket & Taqueria on Lakewood Heights Blvd and W. 136th St.; the Arabian Village Market at W. 130th St. and Lorain; and Assad's Bakery at W. 128th St. and Lorain.

La Plaza is the largest of the three at about 10,000 SF and offers specialty groceries from Mexico as well as fresh tacos for eat-in or take-out. Seating options are limited, but they have wisely installed patio seating, separated from the street by some attractive planters, out on the sidewalk.



Figure 149. La Plaza Supermarket in Lakewood (Google)

While much smaller, Assad's is also an interesting model to look at: a wholesale pita bakery combined with a specialty Middle Eastern grocery offering mostly dry goods, some fresh produce, and prepared foods. In business since 1989, they have stood the test of time and should be looked at closely.

Finally, the Arabian Market, also quite small at 4,000 SF, similarly combines Middle Eastern specialty foods with take-out options; like La Plaza, they have installed some landscaping and an outdoor dining patio offering limited seating.



Figure 150. Arabian Market Village (Google)

The opportunity with the Harley showroom may be for a larger supermarket – perhaps with a wider selection of international foods – and a substantial eat-in dining component, even if as a lease to a third-party. There is also ample room outside the market for an outdoor dining patio that is set back from the street. The closest direct competitors in this scenario would likely be the Marc's ½-mile to the east on Lorain; the other Marc's a mile west in Kamm's Corners; and the Giant Eagle a mile or so to the north east. To better determine the potential of a grocery store on this site, however, a gravity market analysis should be conducted to consider the size and draw of the nearby competition, barriers such as the train tracks, the potential buying power in the neighborhood, and the ideal size for the grocery store.

Short-Term Actions

- Tour area-wide groceries and supermarkets;
- Analyze demand via gravity model analysis;
- Refine business concept; and
- Secure facade improvement loan & other financing.

Long-Term Actions

- Renovate building interior for grocery build-out;
- Renovate façade and install signage and patio; and
- Regrade/beautify parking lot to integrate with bioretention basin (below)

Recommendation 2: On the corner site occupied by the used car dealer, construct a ½-acre bioretention basin to capture stormwater from upslope areas and to serve as an attractive, park-like gateway to the RTA station. Such a project would

need to be a partnership between the property owner, RTA, NEORSD, KCDC, the city, and any potential TOD-oriented developer for the West Park RTA station site.



Figure 151. Artful Rainwater Design (Google)

Barring an extremely expensive move of the West Park RTA station to Lorain Ave, a large and attractive rain garden on this site could enhance the station’s visibility, improve pedestrian access to the station, help mitigate stormwater flowing off the 10 acres of impermeable surface around the RTA station and post office, and subsequently alleviate flooding under the railroad tracks at Lorain Ave. In order to pursue storm water options, the following actions are recommended:

Short-Term Actions

- Explore partnership with NEOSRD and other entities for green infrastructure on lower lot (below);
- Examine and apply for funding/financing mechanisms;
- Conduct engineering and design study, integrating improved pedestrian access to RTA station; and
- Determine ownership or land lease structure.

Long-Term Actions

- Secure funding and/or financing for the project;

- Finalize ownership or land lease structure with NEORSD and/or other parties for .5-acre lower lot;
- Regrade/beautify grocery store parking lot to integrate with bioretention basin; and
- Construct bioretention basin.

Recommendation 3: Explore relocating the City’s Service Center in the rear of the Harley property to the proposed light industrial park across Lorain Ave. Moving the service center is recommended for a variety of reasons: 1) It makes the parcel available for more appropriate and complementary uses, both for the existing neighborhood and for any new TOD on the RTA site; 2) As a number of available and more appropriate vacant sites for the salt sheds and garage exist within close proximity, the impact of such a move on actual services in the neighborhood would be negligible, if any at all; and 3) It would enable new pedestrian and bicycle access to be gained to the proposed grocery store, to the post office and RTA station, and to any new TOD. In order to pursue relocation options, the following actions are recommended:

Short-Term Actions

- Conduct preliminary feasibility analysis for moving the service center, including: potential cost of moving the sheds and garage vs. new construction; the cost and availability of the 3-acre former trailer park south of Lorain Ave.;
- Determine any remediation needs (salt piles) at current location; and
- Develop a phased plan for the move and subsequent site redevelopment (see Recommendation 4 below).

The ideal site for relocating the service center to, is the 3-acre former trailer park behind Ohio Pipe & Supply, currently valued at \$152,500. It might be possible to deconstruct and relocate the salt sheds to the new property, so this should be explored relative to buying or

leasing new structures, where costs vary widely. Site prep costs depend on whether a concrete or asphalt pad is needed if natural surface will suffice.

Action	Estimated Cost
Site Acquisition	\$ 152,000.00
New Salt Shed (ea.)	\$ 100,000.00
Pre-engineered Garage (20,000 SF)	\$ 200,000.00
Site Prep	\$ 75,000.00
Total	\$ 527,000.00

Figure 152. Cost Estimates for Service Garage Relocation (Viking Planning Group)

Recommendation 4: Build a 4-acre park on the vacated Service Center site with a soccer field, loop walking trail, and community gardens with direct access to the neighborhood, station area & future TOD development. If vacated by the Service Center, the resulting 4-acre subparcel would be large enough to accommodate a regulation-size soccer field – of which there are none within three-miles – a ¼-mile loop walking trail, community gardens, seating, and play areas. Such a park would be a major new amenity for both existing and future residents with little to no park access.

A Park Score analysis Figure 153 shows that the study area has the fifth worst access to parks within the City of Cleveland, with much of the neighborhood exhibiting a high or very high need for a park, with the Service Center parcel directly between the two areas most in need.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ The Trust for Public Land. (2019). ParkScore. Retrieved from <https://parkscore.tpl.org/>

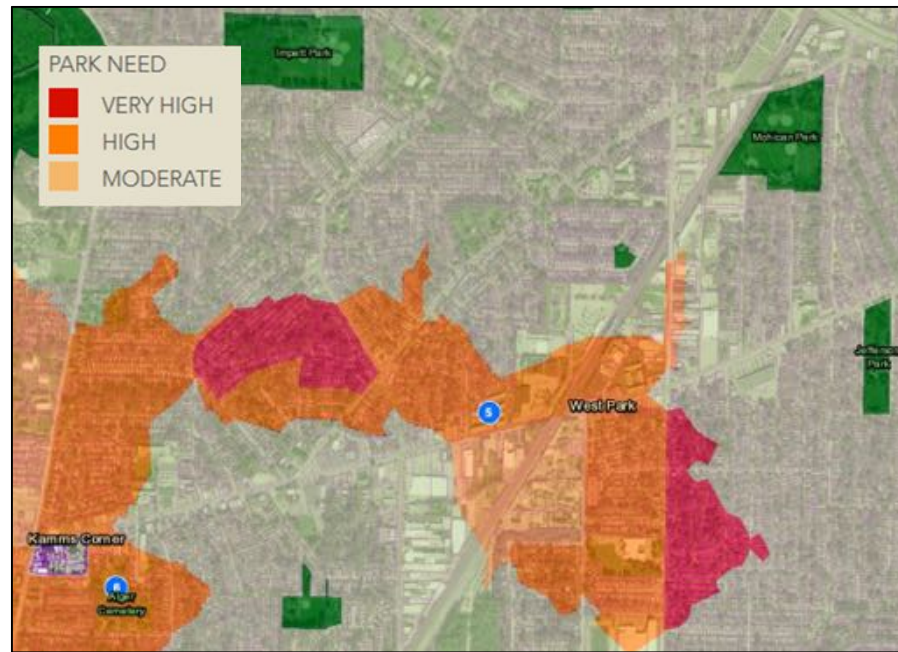


Figure 153. ParkScore Analysis (ParkScore)

Further analysis with the Trust for Public Land’s Park Evaluator tool shows that a 4-acre park on this site would be immediately accessible to nearly 2,700 individuals in over 1,260 households, including 1,385 individuals in 644 households who currently have no access to a park within a 10-minute walk.

Residents’ expressed desire for more parks and greenspace in West Park also came through loud and clear, as did the call for places for youth activities, places to walk for both health and pleasure, and for social gathering spaces that are not a bar or restaurant. Furthermore, the location of the proposed park – and the specific inclusion of a soccer field – in a section of the neighborhood with increasing numbers of immigrant and refugee residents has the potential to positively impact social cohesion and integration with the broader neighborhood. Currently, there are few places in this part of the neighborhood that offer such opportunities.

Building a new neighborhood park will take considerable creative planning and a multi-stakeholder process, starting with the property owner, should be started immediately. A community-driven design process will help ensure that the

park meets the needs of everyone in the neighborhood and that it will be well-stewarded and used.

Short-Term Actions

- Begin discussions with property owner about the whole picture redevelopment of this portion of his property and explore land lease or purchase options;
- Conduct broader community visioning and design process for the park;
- Apply for funding, whether public or private grants, loans, TIF funds, capital project dollars or other; and
- Secure funding and finalize design to integrate with TOD development.

Long-Term Actions

- Facilitate land lease or sale agreement with City for 4-acre sub-parcel;
- Conduct any necessary remediation from salt sheds; and
- Construct park, playing field & gardens, integrated with

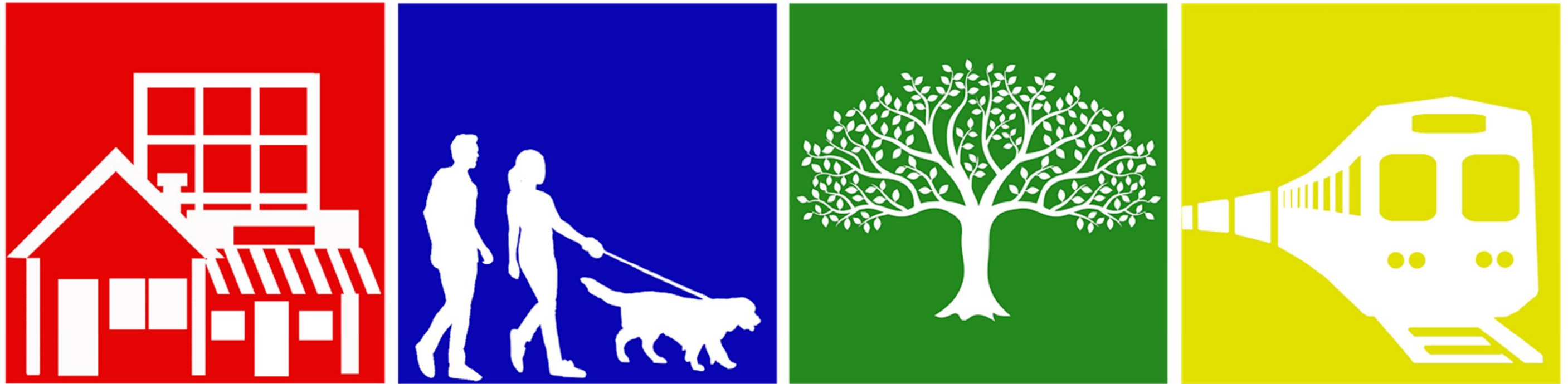
Constructing a new park as envisioned on the site would cost between \$2 to \$3 million. Available funding for urban parks is detailed in our report, whether support from a local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to government grants and loans to private sources.

Action	Estimated Cost
Land Lease/Site Acquisition	\$500,000.00
Site Prep	\$200,000.00
Soft Costs	\$200,000.00
Hard Costs	\$2,000,000.00
Total	\$2,900,000.00
Annual Maintenance	\$100,000.00
Annual User Fees	\$10,000.00
Total Annual Costs	\$90,000.00

Figure 154. Cost Estimates for Green Space (Viking Planning Group)

Potential Funding/Financing Sources for this portion of the recommendation include:

- Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) tied to TOD
- OH State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP): up to 50% of construction
- ODNR Nature Works grant program
- City, County, State & EPA Brownfield funds (if indeed remediation of the site is necessary)
- U.S. Soccer Foundation Safe Places to Play grant
- Other private sources (foundation grants, individual gifts, sponsorships)



Strategies for Implementation

Implementation Strategy

The Implementation Strategy will describe the core steps that should be prioritized in the coming years. The section will include the eight goals agreed upon by the Viking Planning Group as well as the actions that can be taken to realize them. These goals were synthesized through the review of over 1000 surveys collected from multiple locations in West Park at several different times of day over the course of over one month in order to collect a representative sample, in addition to dozens of interviews with neighborhood stakeholders.

Mission

The Viking Planning Group will engage neighborhoods and communities to create sustainable plans that encourage community innovation, economic development, social inclusion, equitable development and improved quality of life.

Vision

The Connecting West Park Plan provides a foundation for community development that focuses on sustainable improvements to encourage business creation, quality housing choices, infrastructure reinvestment, recreational access, public safety and community pride.

Values

- Responsibility to the public interest
- Environmental sustainability
- Social and economic inclusion of all persons
- Planning based on ethical standards

Project Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Improve economic opportunities for all members of the community

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Neighborhood Branding				
A. Create new marketing strategy for business development	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
B. Capitalize on neighboring assets of airport, Metroparks, access to downtown/highways	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
C. Engage the community to showcase West Park's unique history and diversity	Medium	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
Business Incubation				
A. Connect existing local businesses and entrepreneurs to available resources, funding, and technical assistance	High	1-2 Years	City of Cleveland, ECDI, JumpStart, Team NEO, Cuyahoga County, KCDC	\$
B. Form a cluster of innovative businesses that will be able to benefit from the presence of one another	Medium	3-5 Years	City of Cleveland, ECDI, JumpStart, Team NEO, Cuyahoga County, KCDC	\$
C. Work with local universities and other educational institutions to identify early-stage start ups to target for movement into West Park	High	1-2 Years	Case Western Reserve University, Baldwin Wallace, Cleveland State University, CMSD	\$
Business Retention				
A. Encourage the grouping of complementary businesses that will attract customers for one another	Medium	3-5 Years	KCDC	\$
B. Feature existing local businesses in new neighborhood branding effort	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$
C. Leverage new investments in connectivity to bring additional customers into West Park	Medium	3-5 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, RTA	\$
Workforce Development				
A. Continue and expand the existing efforts to teach West Park's refugee community essential skills for employment, including English language proficiency	High	1-2 Years	The Hope Center, Catholic Charities	\$\$
B. Encourage local businesses to prioritize residents of the neighborhood in employment decisions in order to facilitate the accumulation of critical experience for residents, with an awareness that residents will likely make up a large portion of the businesses customers.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
C. Cooperate with the local library branch to make opportunities to learn technology skills available to residents that are aimed both at training younger residents and retraining older ones for the jobs of the future	Medium	3-5 Years	Cleveland Public Library, CMSD	\$\$

Goal 2: Promote a diverse mix of housing types for existing and future residents

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Aging In Place				
A. Permit mixed-use townhomes and condominiums at GCRTA station that is suited for seniors and young professionals.	High	3 Years	City of Cleveland	\$
B. Create affordable living arrangements for people of all ages that offers philanthropic services to the residents in cooperation with local CDC's and other non-profit organizations.	High	3 Years	KCDC, Non-Profits	\$\$
C. Offer high density and walkability to nearby modern amenities. Have a mix of business services on Lorain Ave. that cater to the needs of seniors and young professionals.	Medium	1 Year	City of Cleveland, Private Developer	\$\$
Affordability				
A. Apply for Low-income Housing Tax Credits for new townhomes/condominiums being built.	High	1 Year	State of Ohio	\$
B. Apply for other grants and seek alternative sources of funding to drive down construction price.	High	2 Years	KCDC, Non-profits, grant making foundations	\$
C. Promote opportunities for immigrants and refugees to alter their rent-burden status and seek affordable housing options.	Medium	3 Years	KCDC, The Hope Center	\$
Structure				
A. Build new, efficient, and modern 21st century housing that meets the needs of a diverse community.	High	3 Years	Developer, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$
B. Work with homeowners and apply to grant programs to inject capital into dated housing structures to modernize them and improve aesthetics in the area.	Medium	2 Years	City of Cleveland, Residents	\$\$
C. Housing stock being newly created will abide by environmentally friendly standards and should be awarded the LEED certificate for sustainably built structures.	Low	2 Years	Green Council, City of Cleveland	\$

Goal 3: Foster a diverse, mixed-income, transit-oriented community

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Quality of Life				
A. Encourage a sense of community through arts (creative placemaking) with murals, galleries, greenspace, public space, etc.	Medium	2 Years	City of Cleveland, KCDC	\$\$
B. Provide neighborhood amenities including small, local retail shops, daycare, and passive exercise equipment that allows for people to engage with the space.	Medium	3 Years	City of Cleveland, KCDC	\$\$
C. Creating an identity for the site through the continued redevelopment efforts of previously underutilized space that will define the neighborhood's character.	High	1 Year	KCDC	\$
Housing				
A. Create housing options for prospective middle market residents through townhome development, which transitions from adjacent neighborhoods. Could be for sale or for lease units allowing for a healthy mix.	High	2 Years	Developer, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$
B. Create denser housing options to effectively utilize space and transit asset through low and mid-rise apartments that cater to a broad demographic base.	High	3 Years	Developer, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$
C. Incorporate diverse housing stock and equitable opportunity through mixed-income housing options.	Medium	2 Years	Developer, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$
D. Accommodate older residents (empty nesters, seniors, etc.) to be able to age in place with a senior housing element and accessible development catering to their needs.	Medium	2 Years	KCDC, Developer	\$\$
Environmental				
A. Implement a more robust, green footprint within the development (grass, trees, walkways, playgrounds etc., general landscaping) and reduce percentage of impervious surfaces in the area.	High	2 Years	Metroparks, City of Cleveland	\$
B. Encourage proper wastewater management with green infrastructure throughout the site.	Low	3 Years	NERSD, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$
C. Foster a healthy urban tree canopy by strategically planting a diverse mix of trees that will make the site cooler, more comfortable, and aesthetically pleasing (to reduce the heat island effect of the site at present with less pavement and less ground exposure).	High	2 Years	Metroparks, CVNP,	\$
Transit and Mobility				
A. Improve connectivity to the site with enhanced access points via a second, complete street and a redesigned neighborhood footpath (cut through improvement).	High	2 Years	Developer	\$
B. Create partnerships between community stakeholders, investors, and the GCRTA.	High	3 Years	GCRTA, Residents	\$
C. Promote multimodal options with bike racks, real-time arrival/transit information, and wayfinding infrastructure.	Low	3 Years	City of Cleveland	\$\$

Goal 4: Enhance the vitality of the Lorain Ave. Corridor

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Land Use Standards				
A. Implement mixed-use zoning along the commercially zoned corridor to further promote the diversity of uses, goods and services rendered, along Lorain Ave.	High	1-2 Years	City of Cleveland (CPC)	\$
B. Implement a form-based code overlay along the corridor to promote a more inviting neighborhood street feel, such as setbacks (expanded upon in Goal 6)	High	1-2 Years	City of Cleveland (CPC)	\$
C. Promote financial and social benefits to initiate infill development along West 140th St. through West 150th St.	Medium	1-2 Years	City of Cleveland, KCDC, KA BID	\$\$\$
Streetscaping				
A. Promote infrastructure modification to increase the safety of pedestrian and bicyclists using Lorain Ave.	Medium	2-3 Years	City of Cleveland (AR, EN, PC) Ohio Department of Transportation, Bike Cleveland, Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works,	\$\$\$
B. Foster more visually stimulating treelawn, sidewalks, and crosswalk experience through light, art, street furniture and vegetation (expanded upon in Goal 6)	Medium	2-3 Years	City of Cleveland (CPC), Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works, KA BID, Bike Cleveland, People for Bikes	\$\$
C. Ensure enjoyable use of the sidewalks by all members of the community through ADA compliance, and other measures to promote accessibility and safety	High	2-3 Years	City of Cleveland (EN, PC, SS), Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works	\$
Enhance its Existing Nodes				
A. Build a robust Civic Node through property acquisition, parking lot consolidation, and ground connection	Medium	2-3 Years	City of Cleveland, Cleveland Public Library, West Park YMCA	\$\$\$
B. Connect West Park through Lorain Ave. retail through establishment of a pedestrian overlay zone, and various wayfinding products between W 140th St. and W 157th St. Look into creating a road diet	Medium	2-3 Years	City of Cleveland (CPC), KCDC	\$\$
C. Service Center - improve use-to make it more livable	High	2-3 Years		\$

Goal 5: Encourage redevelopment along the Lorain Ave. Corridor

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Reinvestment of underutilized property				
A. Promote financial and social benefits to initiate adaptive reuse of historic and non-historic vacant buildings along West 140th St. through West 150th St.	High	2-3 Years	City of Cleveland (B, ED), KCDC, Home Depot Foundation, Cleveland Restoration Society	\$\$\$
B. Leverage existing loans for property and façade improvements	High	1-2 Years	City of Cleveland (B, ED), KCDC, KA BID, Additional Local Profit and Non-Profit Organizations	
C. In the interim of seeking long-term tenants, establish short-term local small business pop-up marketplaces	Medium	Ongoing	KCDC, KA BID	\$\$
Supportive use retail				
A. Aggregate local and regional supportive business services and entrepreneurship resources	High	Ongoing	City of Cleveland (ED, B), Fund for Our Economic Future, Greater Cleveland Partnership, JumpStart, KCDC, KA BID, Various Non-Profit and Private Foundations, TeamNEO,	\$
B. Utilize social organizations to connect local and regional residents to the said services and resources, with inclusion of immigrant and veteran populations	Medium	Ongoing	Neighborhood Religious Institutions, The Hope Center, Kiwanis Center, Veterans of Foreign Wars, YMCA	\$
C. Generate innovative retail strategies to keep pace with the constant changes in retail and business trends, such as non-traditional lease durations	Medium	Ongoing	City of Cleveland (ED, B), KCDC, KA BID	\$
Destination Development				
A. Create a strong identity for West Park that honors its history and highlights its neighborhood feel within Cleveland (Expanded in Goal 6)	Medium	Ongoing	KCDC, KA BID, Neighborhood Groups	\$
B. Market West Park's competitive advantages such as its accessibility, strong residential base, and institutional anchors	Medium	Ongoing	Cleveland Clinic, Fund for Our Economic Future, JobsOhio, KCDC, KA BID, TeamNEO	\$\$
C. Elevate interest in conducting business in West Park through offering sought after commercial, social, entertainment, and recreational amenities	Medium	Ongoing	KCDC, KA BID	\$\$
D. Provide financial and social incentives for companies relocating, expanding, or staking ground in along Lorain Ave.'s vacant buildings and undeveloped parcels	High	Ongoing	City of Cleveland (ED), BioEnterprise, JobsOhio, JumpStart, KCDC, Fund for Our Economic Future, Greater Cleveland Partnership, JumpStart, KCDC, KA BID, MAGNET	\$\$\$

Goal 6: Support physical and social cohesion of the study area into the neighborhood

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Gateways				
A. Identify major neighborhood gateways to create a sense of neighborhood identity. Suggested locations of gateway developments are the east and west boundaries along Lorain Ave., the north and south locations along West 150th St. and north and south locations along Rocky River Dr.	Medium	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$
B. Work with industry professionals to design a uniform gateway design at specified locations. Design should be conducive with the neighborhoods history and character but also reflect the neighborhoods continued future strengths.	Medium	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$\$
C. Construct and install gateways at specified locations.	Medium	2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$\$\$
Lighting				
A. Work with industry professionals to engineer plans for the continuation of the current Kamm's Corner lighting design along Lorain Ave. east to the neighborhoods boundary.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$
B. Coordinate lighting designs with streetscaping and future development.	High	Ongoing	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$
C. Install lighting concepts with suggested streetscaping.	High	2-5 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$\$\$
Streetscaping				
A. Work with industry professionals to create and engineer streetscaping designs to promote neighborhood character and identity.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$
B. Streetscaping should include signage, benches, trash receptacles, street lamps, trees and landscaping.	High	Ongoing	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$
C. Phase streetscaping efforts with proposed development efforts along Lorain Ave. to the neighborhood boundary as first priority. Secondary priorities should be established along West 150th St. Ongoing priorities should continue outside the site plan along Rocky River Dr.	High	2-5 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland, KA BID	\$\$\$
Human Scale Development				
A. Work with design professionals to establish future development guidelines that support appropriately scaled structures, walkability and reduced automobile reliance. Scaled development should be conducive with existing architecture and provide a sense of space.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$
B. Identify character elements to be included in future development or redevelopment that continue the unique sense of space and heritage of the neighborhood. Historic preservation of key structures should be emphasized.	High	Ongoing	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$
C. Design elements should reduce automobile parking on Lorain Ave. with buildings being street facing. Parking requirements should be designed to be behind structures or common parking areas.	High	2-5 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$

Goal 7: Develop a modernization strategy for aging housing

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Neighborhood Branding				
A. Identify areas of the neighborhood in need of reinvestment and redevelopment. Phase one priorities should include side by side double housing in the study area.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
B. Work with industry professionals to establish design guidelines for the remodeling of existing housing to promote neighborhood consistency and culture seen in surrounding neighborhoods.	High	Ongoing	KCDC	\$
C. Identified areas of redevelopment should work with residents on establishing design guidelines and standards consistent with surrounding areas of housing and future needs.	High	2-5 Years	KCDC	\$\$\$
Streetscaping				
A. Work with industry professionals to create and engineer streetscaping designs to promote neighborhood character and identity.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$
B. Streetscaping should include signage, benches, trash receptacles, street lamps, trees and landscaping.	High	Ongoing	KCDC, City of Cleveland, Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund	\$
C. Phase streetscaping efforts with proposed development in the study area neighborhood as first priority. Secondary priorities should be established outside the study area.	High	2-5 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$\$\$
Concept Designs and Standards				
A. Work with industry professionals to create and engineer design standards to promote neighborhood character and identity.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$
B. Design standards should include uniform mailboxes, house lighting, siding, roofing materials, paint colors, windows, window shutters and other architectural elements.	High	Ongoing	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$
C. Develop reinvestment incentives for homeowners to conform to neighborhood design standards.	High	1 Year	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$\$
Develop Model Housing				
A. Work with property owners to purchase one or more residential units to redevelop to new design standards.	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
B. Continue to purchase and redevelop residential units to new design standards to encourage additional residential redevelopment.	High	Ongoing	KCDC	\$\$\$
C. Work with residential property owners on establishing community character and creating a sense of place to promote new investment.	High	2-5 Years	KCDC	\$

Goal 8: Increase entertainment, recreation, and shopping options for all residents of West Park

Action Steps	Priority Level	Time to Complete	Responsible Parties & Partners	Est. Cost
Reactivation of vacant and underutilized Spaces				
A. Cooperate with governments and non-profits to create streetscape improvements along critical corridors, including Lorain Ave.	Medium	3-5 Years	City of Cleveland, KCDC, The Cleveland Foundation	\$\$\$
B. Prioritize the planting of trees in order to preserve and expand the existing tree canopy, creating a more environmentally friendly and welcoming climate	Medium	3-5 Years	City of Cleveland, Metroparks, KCDC	\$\$
C. Encourage the development of businesses with smaller set-backs in order to eventually create a "street wall," making the neighborhood more walkable and attractive	Low	5-10 Years	City of Cleveland, Local Developers, Local Businesses	\$
Redevelopment of former K-Mart				
A. Redevelop the existing surface parking lot to create a more engaging space that will attract and retain potential customers	Medium	3-5 Years	KCDC	\$\$
B. Leverage streetscape improvements and increased neighborhood connectivity to create a pedestrian-friendly hub of neighborhood activity	Medium	3-5 Years	City of Cleveland, RTA, KCDC	\$\$
C. Create a community-focused center of the development that will be able to host events, and serve as a usable public-space for residents and visitors	Medium	3-5 Years	KCDC	\$\$
Create West Park as a destination (Retail Branding)				
A. Emphasize unique elements of West Park's history and built environment to create a recognizable and distinct "brand" for the neighborhood	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$
B. Clarify geographical boundaries in order to create a sense of place	High	1-2 Years	KCDC, City of Cleveland	\$\$
C. Encourage the participation of local businesses in community events in order to raise awareness of the businesses and to integrate them into the neighborhood's identity	High	1-2 Years	KCDC	\$

Funding Sources

Below is a list of funding sources that can be leveraged to help the study plans development recommendation happen. The sources of funding are from the non-profit and for-profit sectors and Local, State, Federal organizations.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Type	Program	Focus
Cleveland Clinic Foundation my.clevelandclinic.org/about/community/reports/benefit	Hospital System	General Grant	Healthcare Services, Wellness Initiatives
Cleveland Foundation clevelandfoundation.org/grants/impact-areas	Community Foundation	General Grant	Arts and Culture, Environment, Economic Transformation, Neighborhoods
Cleveland Restoration Society clevelandrestoration.org/our-programs	Historic Preservation	Heritage Home Programs, Historic Properties Program	Historic Preservation of Infrastructure
Economic and Community Development Institute ecd.org/invest/loan-program	Small Business	Small Business Loans, Veteran Loans, Construction Loans	Economic Development
George Gund Foundation gundfoundation.org	Community Foundation	General Grant	Arts, Economic Development and Community Revitalization, Environment, Human Services
Home Depot Foundation corporate.homedepot.com/community/home-depot-foundation-grants	Community Foundation	Community Impact Grants Program, Veteran Housing Grants Program	Housing Infrastructure
The Kresge Foundation kresge.org/opportunities	National Foundation	General Grants	American Cities, Arts & Culture, Education, Health, Human Services
Ohio History Connection ohiohistory.org/preserve/local-history-services/history-fund/history-fund-application	Historic Preservation	History Fund	Preserving Historic Connection
People for Bikes peopleforbikes.org/grant-guidelines	National	General Grant	Bicycle Infrastructure
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation rwjf.org/en/how-we-work/grants-and-grant-programs	National Foundation	Health Systems, Healthy Children, Healthy Weight, Healthy Communities, Health Leadership	Health Equity
Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund treefund.org/researchgrants	National	Numerous	Arboriculture, Urban Forestry

FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Type	Program	Focus
Citizens Bank citizensbank.com/community/contributions.aspx	Bank	General	Economic Development, Small Business Development, Affordable Housing, Neighborhood Revitalization
Dollar Bank Foundation dollar.bank/Company/About/Corporate-Responsibility/Dollar-Bank-Foundation	Foundation	General	Community Reinvestment, Community and Economic Development, Education, Human Services, Arts
Google.org google.org/our-work	Foundation	Impact Challenge, Inclusion, Economic Opportunity	Innovative Non-Profit Programs
Huntington Bank huntington.com/Community/corporate-giving	Bank	General	Community Revitalization and Stabilization, Affordable Housing, Economic and Community Development
KeyBank Foundation key.com/about/corporate-responsibility/keybank-foundation.jsp	Foundation	General	Affordable Housing and Homeownership, Economic Self-Sufficient Families, Safe and Stable Communities, Small Business Growth
PNC Foundation pnc.com/en/about-pnc/corporate-responsibility/philanthropy/pnc-foundation	Foundation	General	Economic Development, Affordable Housing, Community Development, Community Services, Arts & Culture
Southwest Airlines southwest.com/assets/pdfs/southwest-difference/southwest-citizenship/charitable_guidelines_charitable_giving.pdf	Airline	Charitable Giving	Local Giving, Community Outreach

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Type	Program	Focus
City of Cleveland rethinkcleveland.org/About-Us/Our-Programs/Economic-Development-Loan-Program.aspx	City	Vacant Property Initiative, Neighborhood Retail Assistance Program, Working Capital Loan Program, Equipment Loan Program, Mayor's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative Loan Program, Municipal Small Business Initiative, Tech Delta Program, Job Creation In	Economic Development
Cuyahoga Arts & Culture cacgrants.org/grant-programs	Public Funder	General Operating Support, Project Support, Creative Culture Grants	Neighborhood Connections, Support for Artists, Creativity Projects
Cuyahoga County Department of Development cuyahogacounty.us/development	County	Business Attraction Incentives, Business Growth Lending Program, Economic Development Loan Program, Home Repair Loan, Housing Enhancement Loan Program, Heritage Home Loan Program, Cuyahoga County Property Demolition Program, Large Scale Attraction Loan Program, Microenterprise Loan Fund Program	Development
Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works publicworks.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/Project-Planning-Funding.aspx	County	Capital Improvement Program, Facilities Capital Improvement Plan	Public Works
Kamm's Area Special Improvement District kammscorners.com/work/special-improvement-district/	Neighborhood	Special Improvement District Revenue	Special Improvement District
Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency noaca.org/community-assistance-center/funding-programs	Metropolitan Planning Organization	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program, Surface Transportation Block Grant Programs, Transportation Alternatives	Regional Planning
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District neorsd.org/funding-opportunities/	Regional	Green Infrastructure Grant Program for the Combined Sewer Area, Watershed Organization Service Agreements	Waste Management

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Type	Program	Focus
JobsOhio jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives	State	Economic Development Grant, Growth Fund, Research & Development Center, Revitalization Program, Workforce Grant, 166 Direct Loan, Ohio Enterprise Loan, Innovation Ohio Loan Fund, Roadwork Development Fund, Job Creation Tax Credit, DataCenter Tax Abatement	Economic Development
Ohio Department of Natural Resources ohiodnr.gov/grants	State	Land and Water Conservation Fund, Clean Ohio Trails Fund, Recreational Trails Program, NatureWorks Program	Environment
Ohio Department of Transportation dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/Pages/Programs.aspx	State	Ohio Public Transportation Grant Program, Urban Transit Program, Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program	Transportation
Ohio Development Services Agency development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_grantsloansbonds.htm	State	Community Grants, Loans, Bonds, and Tax Credits	Development
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency epa.ohio.gov/portals/0/general%20pdfs/funding.pdf	State	Lake Erie Protection Fund, Recycling Market Development Grants, Surface Water Improvement Fund	Environment

FEDERAL ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Type	Program	Focus
Economic Development Association eda.gov/funding-opportunities	Federal	Seed Fund Support Grant Competition, Regional Innovations Strategies Program, Economic Development Assistance Programs, Research and National Technical Assistance Program, Planning and Local Technical Assistance programs	Economic Development
Federal Transit Administration transit.dot.gov/grants	Federal- US DoT	BUILD Grants, Capital Investment Grants, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals w/ Disabilities, Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program, Human Trafficking Awareness and Public Safety Initiative, Mobility on Demand, Pilot Program for TOD Planning	Transportation
National Endowment For the Arts arts.gov/grants	National Foundation	Art Works, Challenge America, Our Town, Research: Art Works, Translation Projects, Partnership Agreements	Arts and Writing

Planning Team

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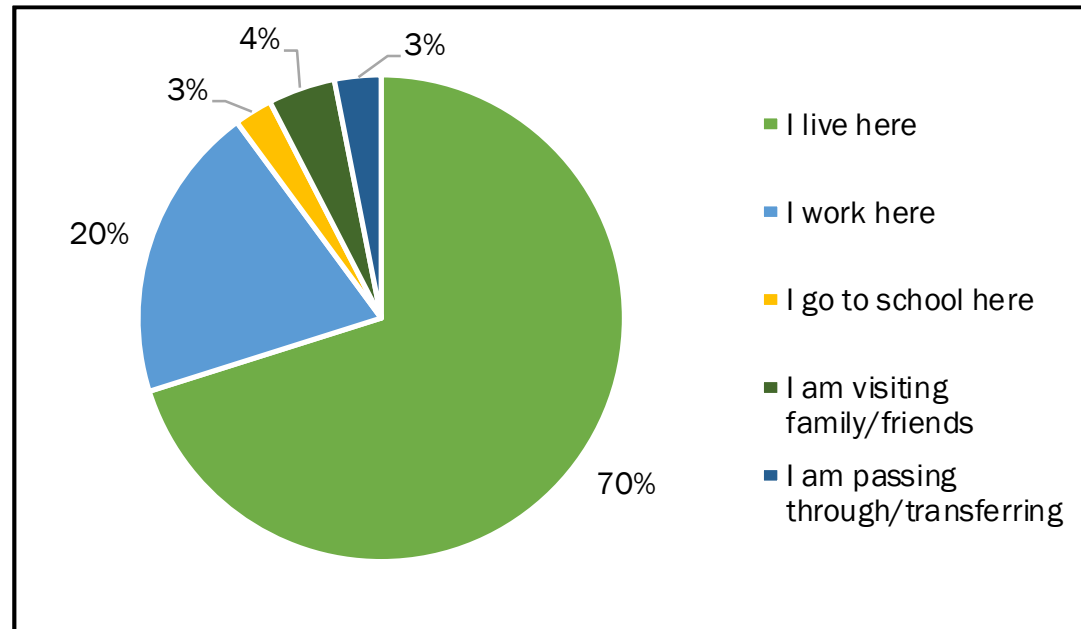
Nick Zingale

Appendix I: Survey Questions and Results

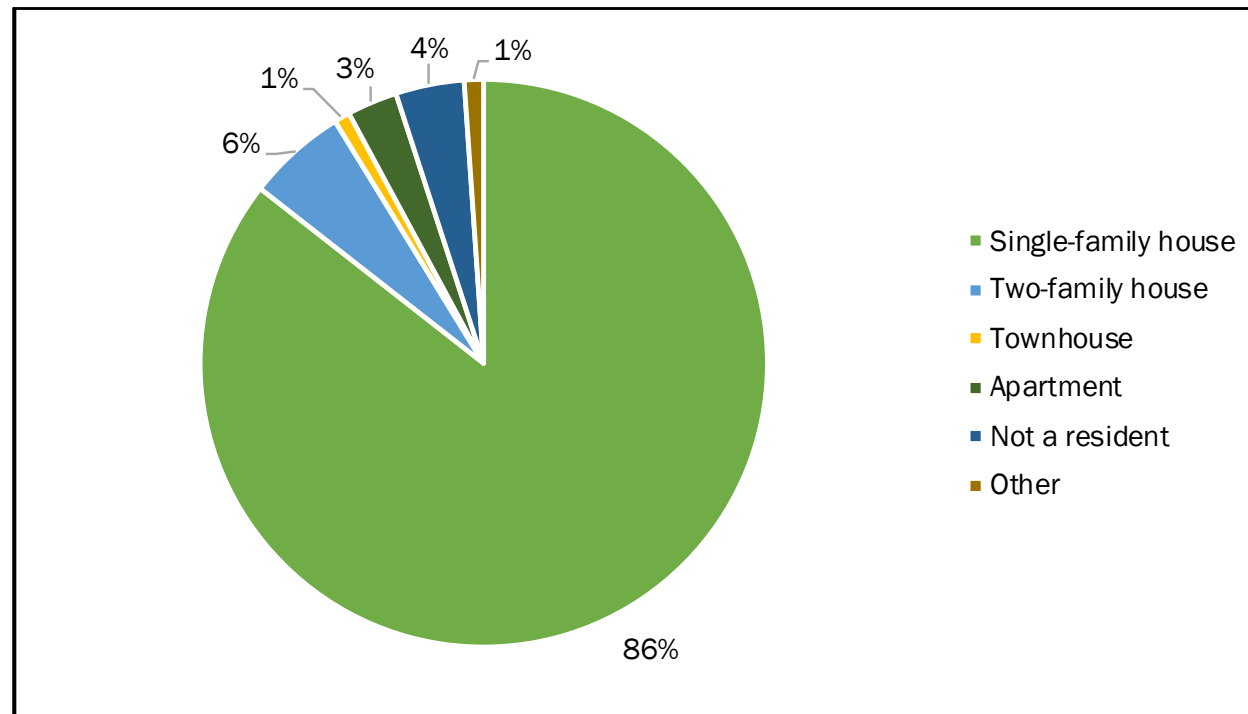
West Park Patron Survey

Demographics:

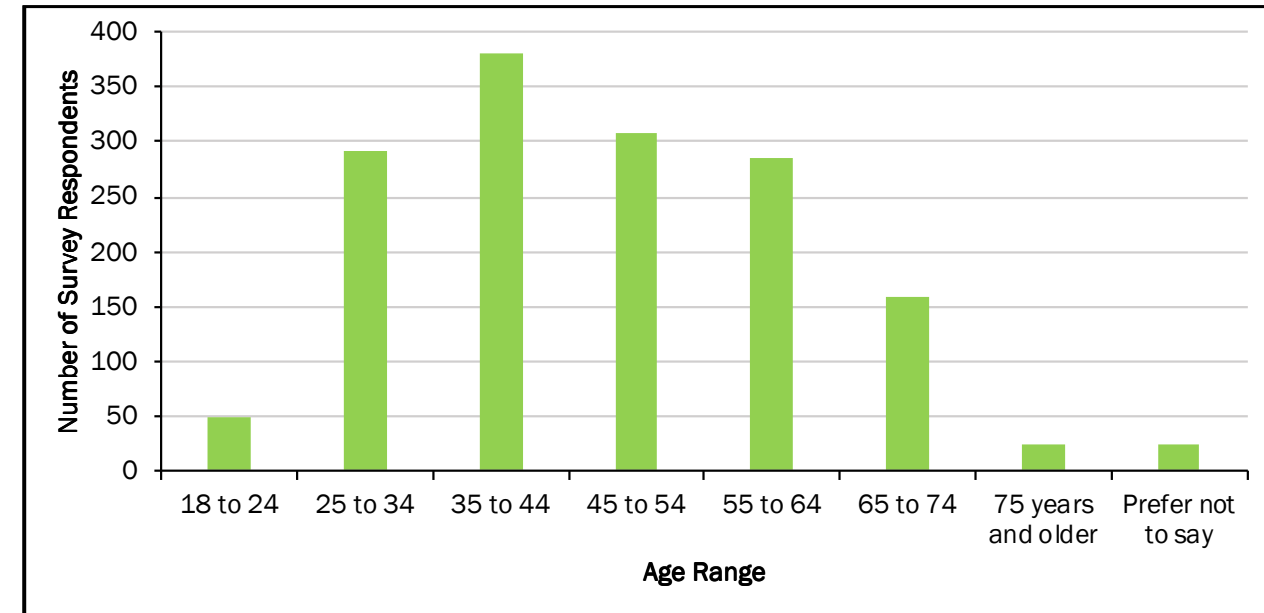
What is your connection to the West Park neighborhood?



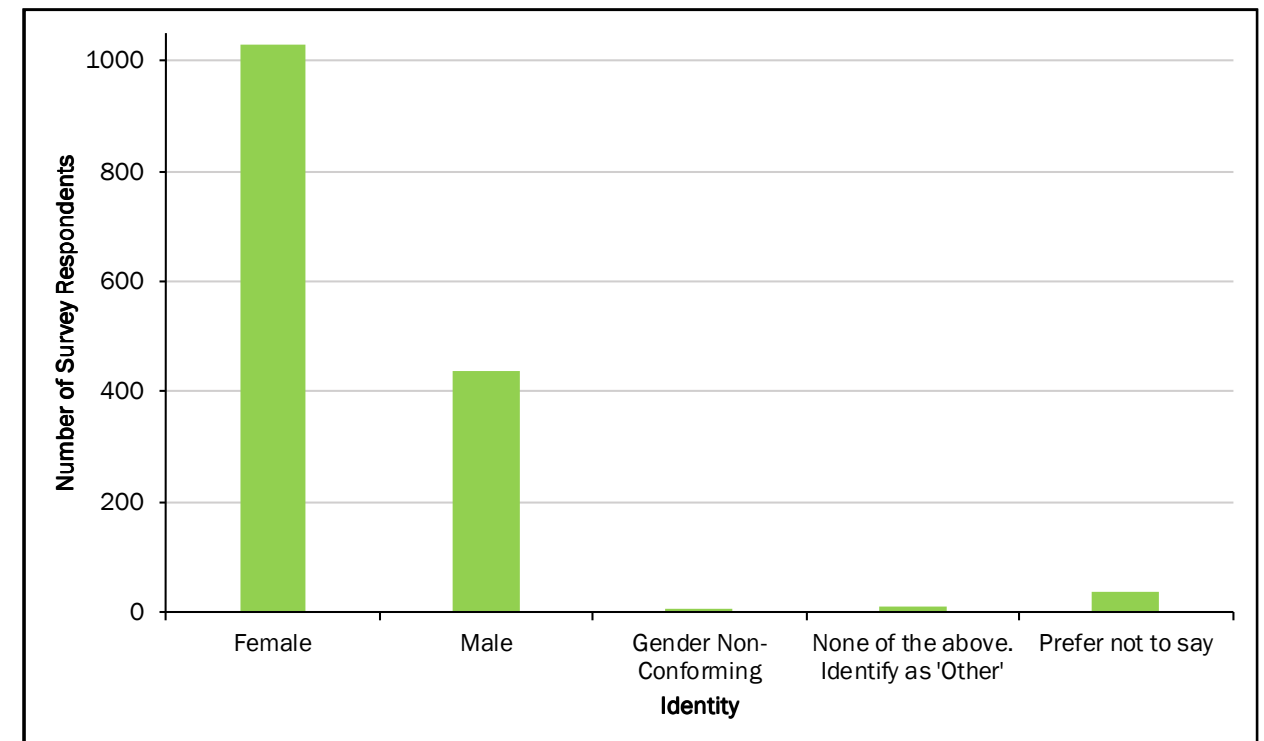
If you're a resident of West Park, how would you best describe where you live now?



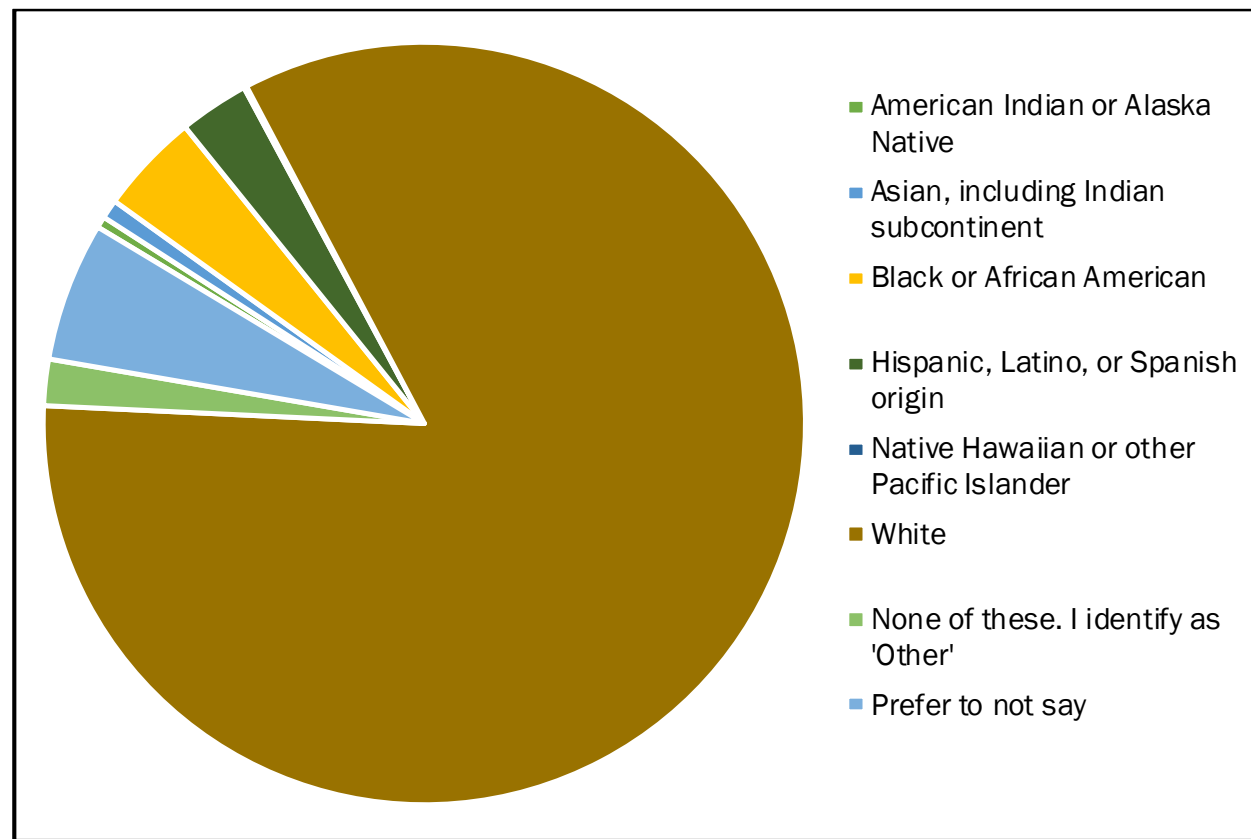
What is your approximate age?



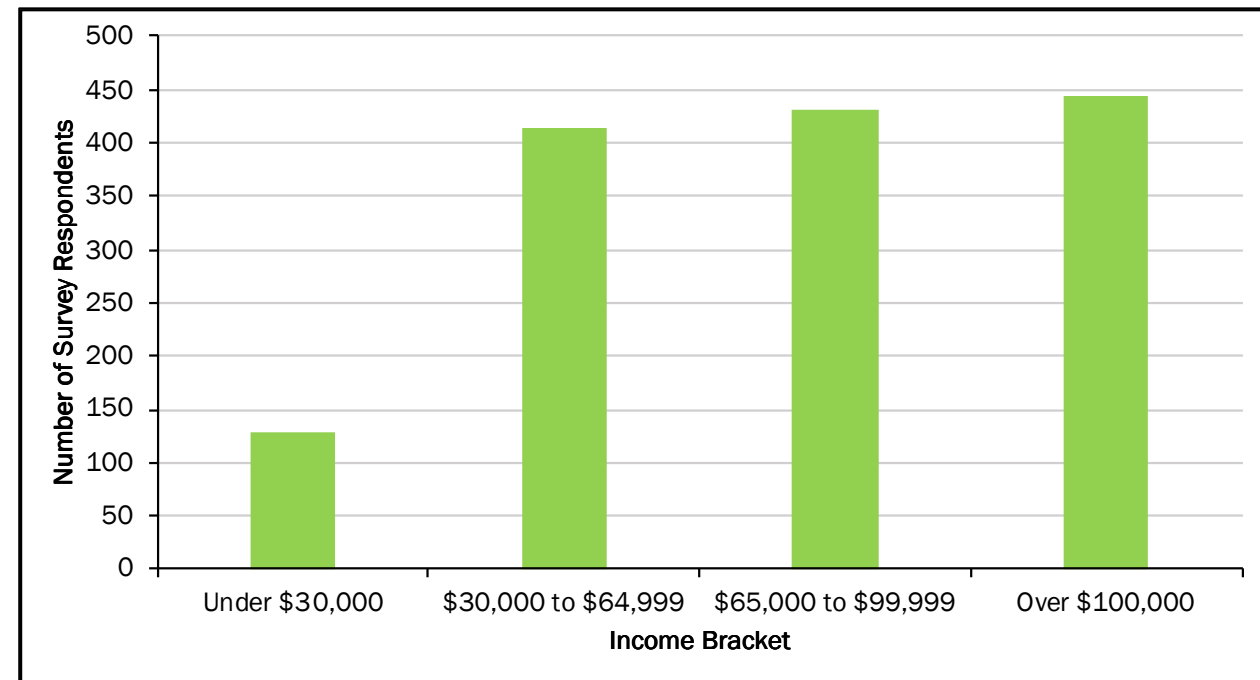
Do you identify as:



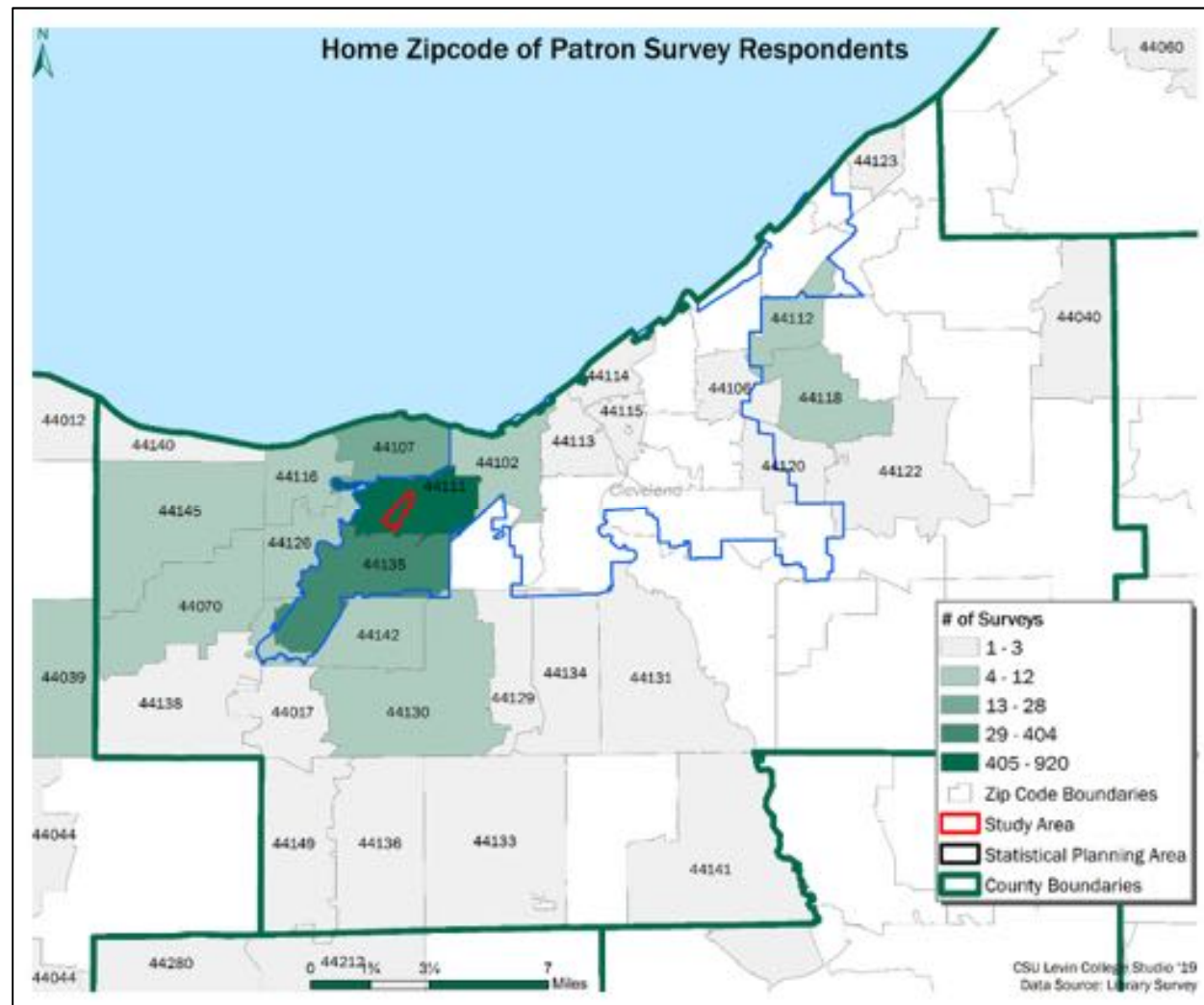
Do you identify as: (you may select more than one answer)



What is your approximate household income?



Zip codes of survey respondents



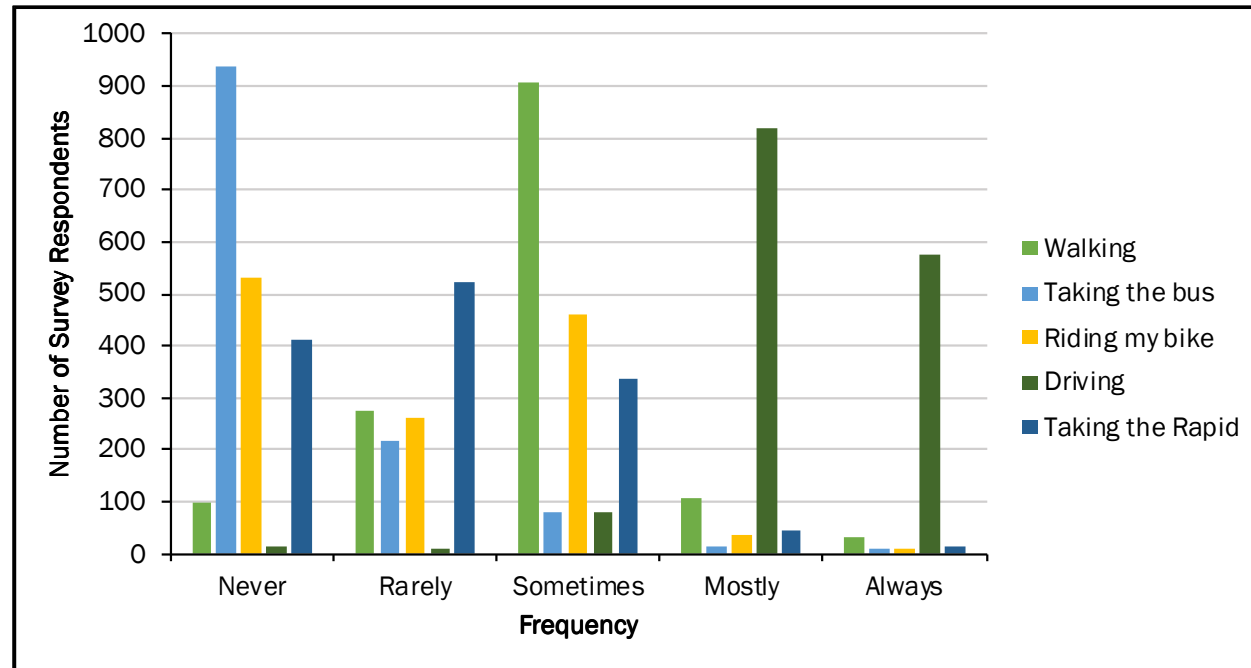
Preferences:

What specific places do you feel are missing from West Park?

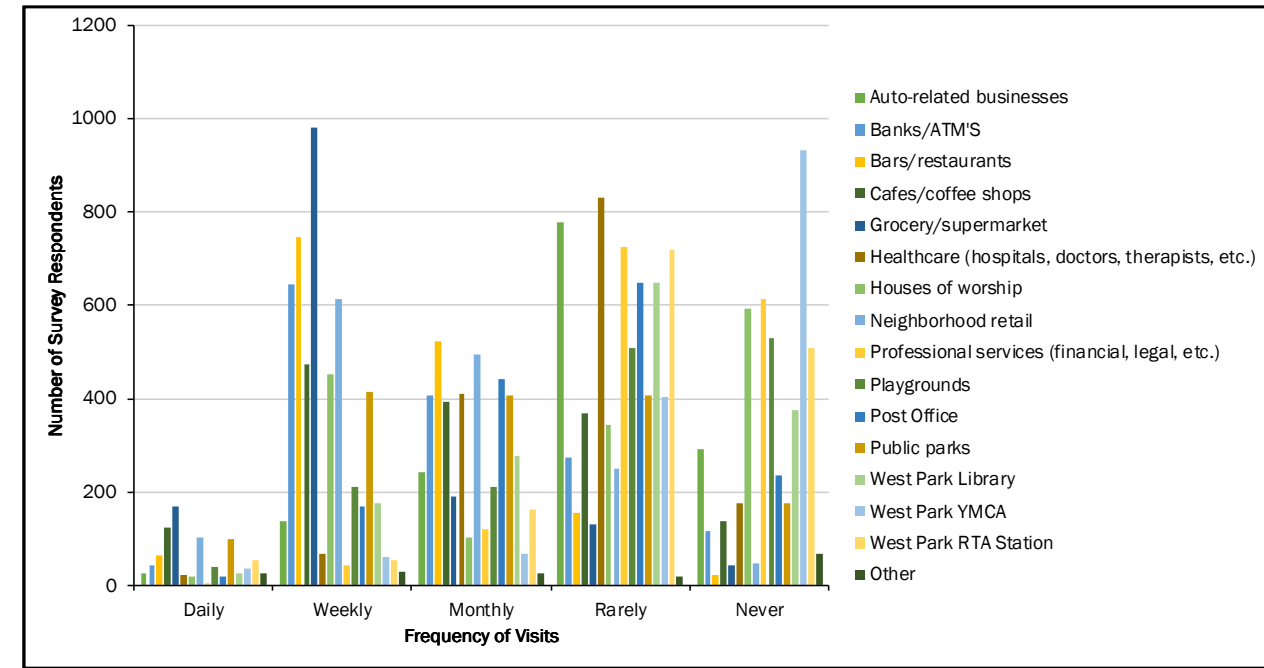


Image courtesy of: <https://worditout.com>

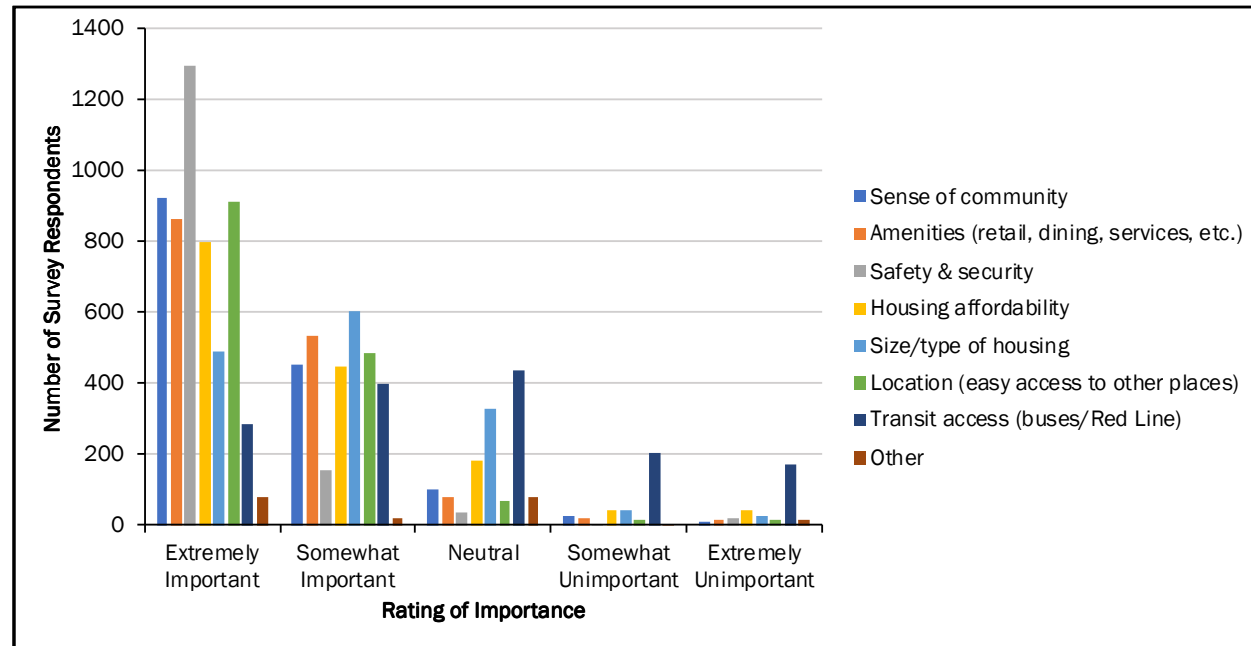
How do you get around West Park?



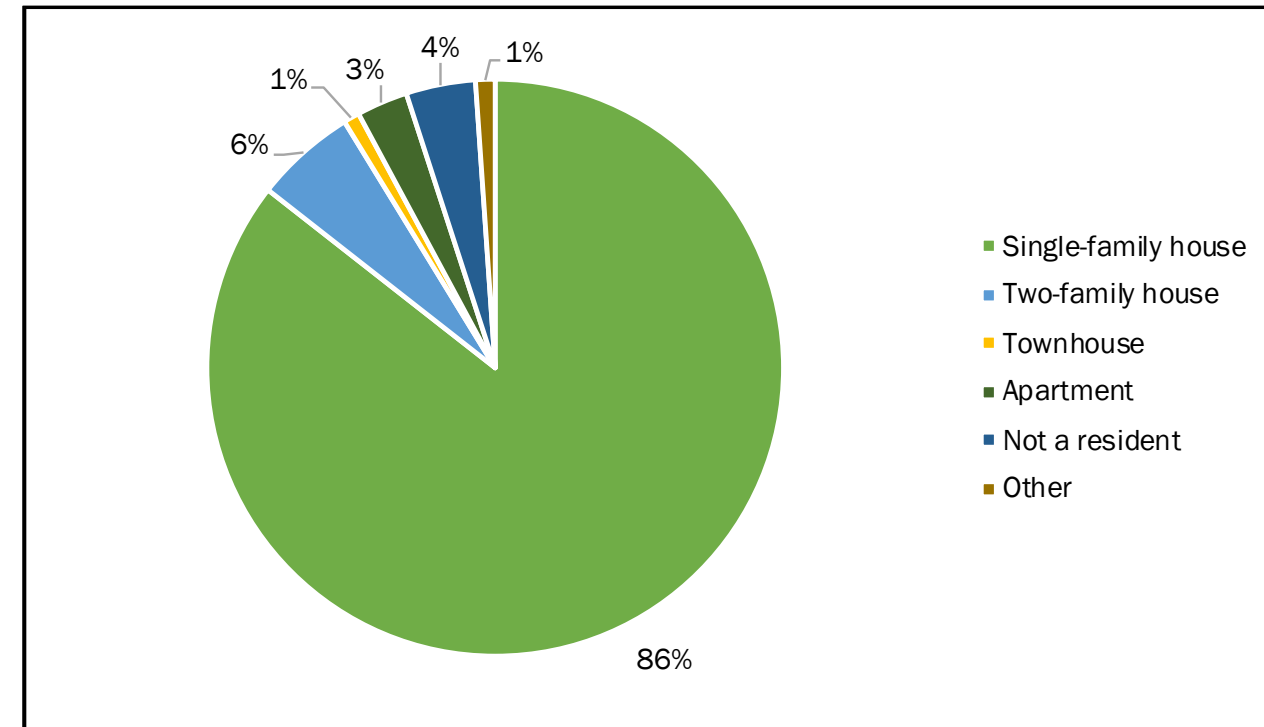
How frequently do you visit the following places in West Park?



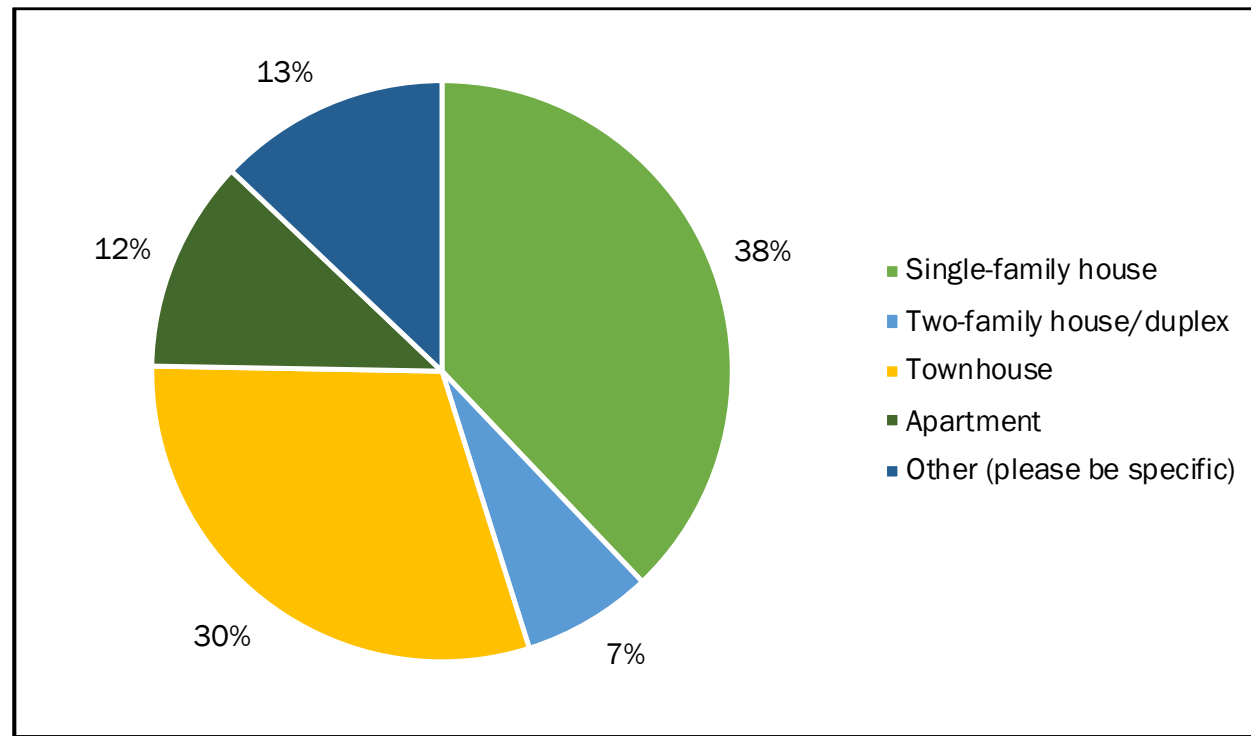
Rate the importance of each of the following:



If you're a resident of West Park, how would you best describe where you live now?



What type of housing could West Park use more of? Please check all that apply.



What redevelopment or other changes would you like to see along Lorain Ave?

Shopping, dining, businesses, neighborhood identity (placemaking), rid of vacant properties; more general amenities (restaurants, boutiques, bowling alley, entertainment, coffee shops)

What redevelopment or other changes would you like to see at the Kmart Site?

Mixed-use development, big box retail (grocers, Target, Walmart), housing (upscale development, townhomes, apartments), family rec center, tear down Kmart and start fresh, movie theater; active space for community to use that includes variety of amenities

What redevelopment or other changes would you like to see at the RTA Station?

Security, green space, housing, lighting, clean up, improved connectivity and walkways, transit oriented development, public art

What do you like MOST about West Park?

Sense of community, affordability, accessibility, amenities, proximity to downtown and other areas, metroparks, housing and well maintained infrastructure for residences, restaurants and bars

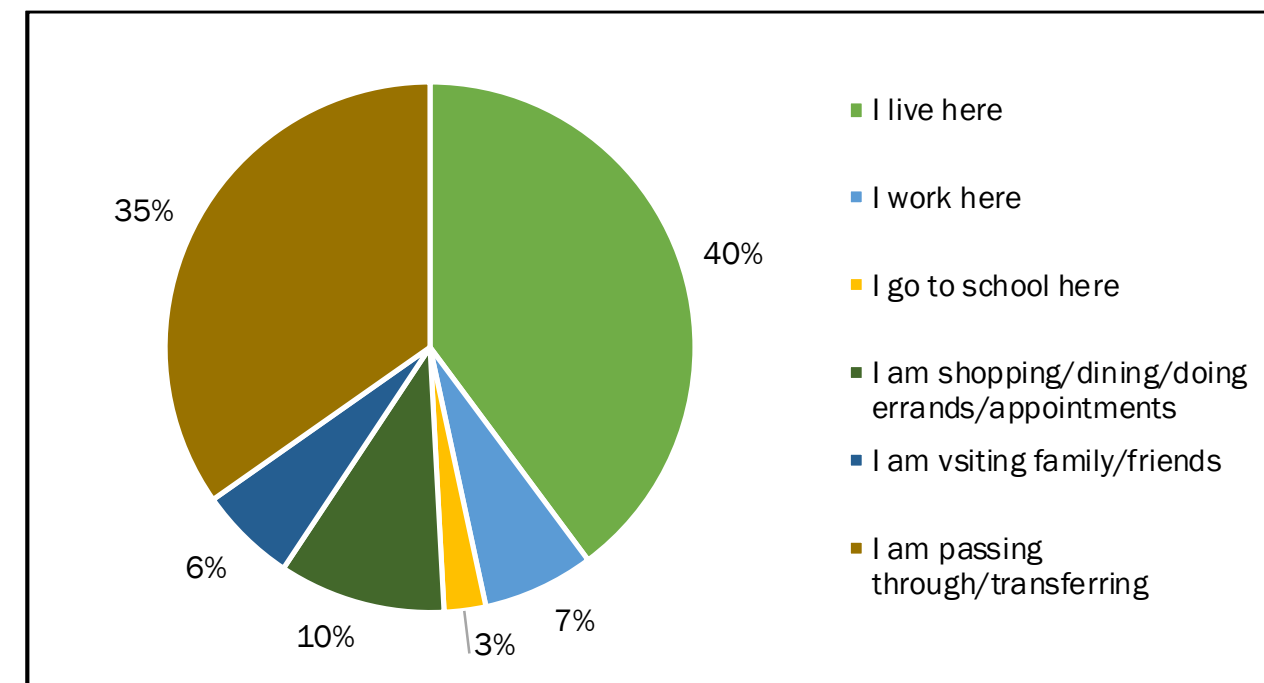
What do you like LEAST about West Park?

Crime, racism, decline of properties (vacancies), too many bars/restaurants and not enough healthy options, need better grocer option, lack of certain amenities (movie theater, big box retail), lack of cleanliness, “untapped potential”

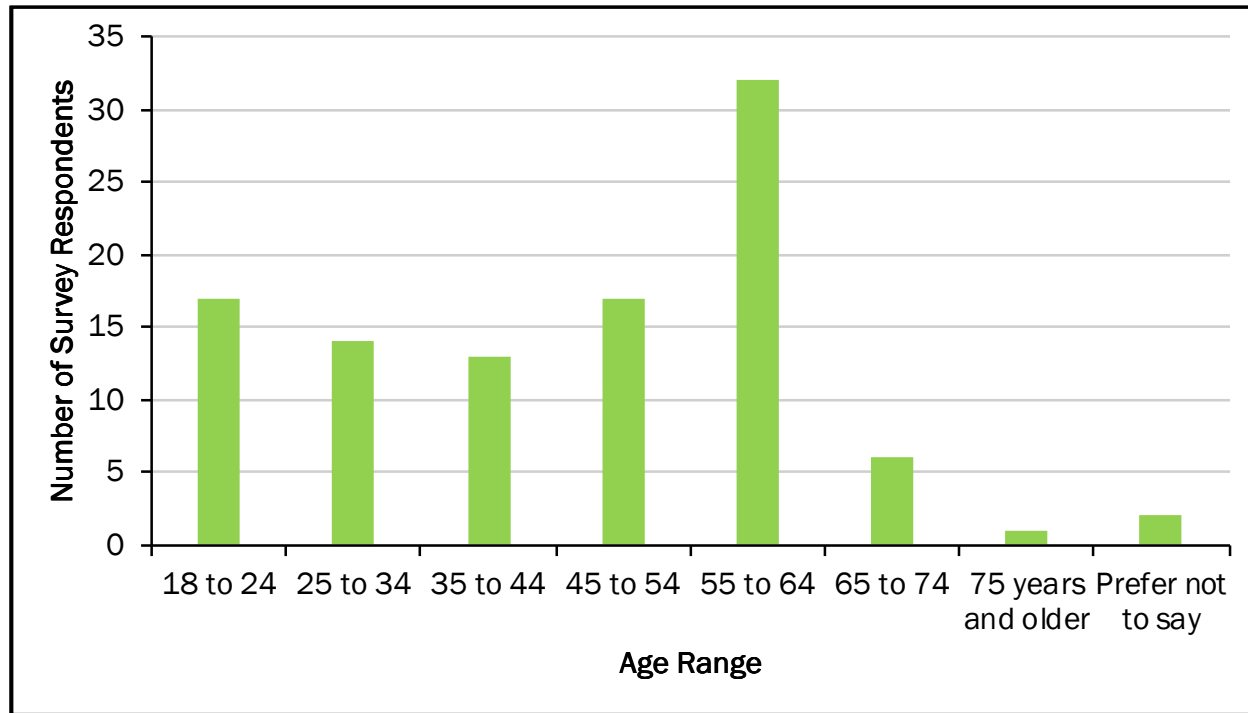
Transit Survey Data Charts

Demographics:

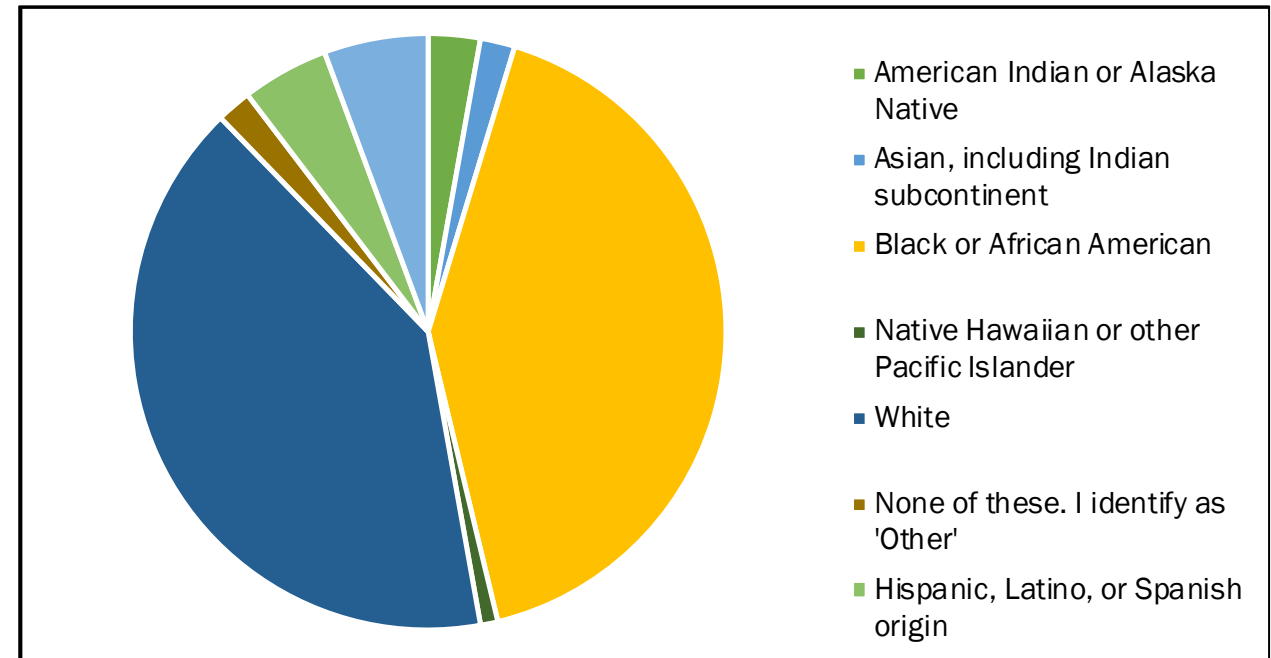
What is your connection to the West Park neighborhood? Please check all that apply.



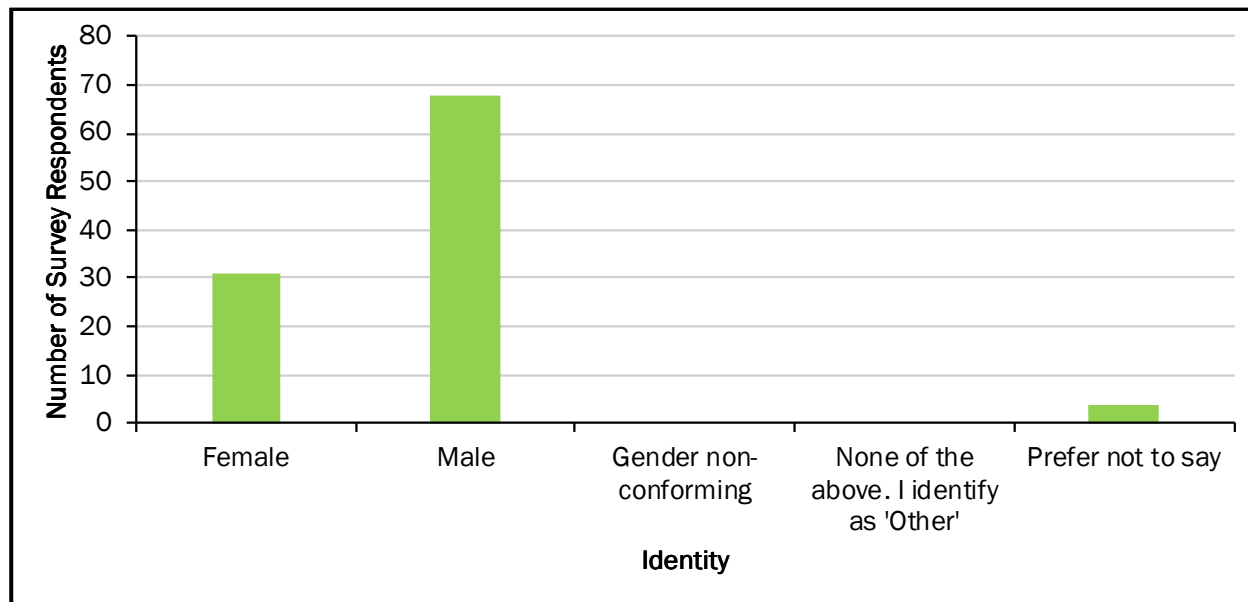
What is your approximate age?



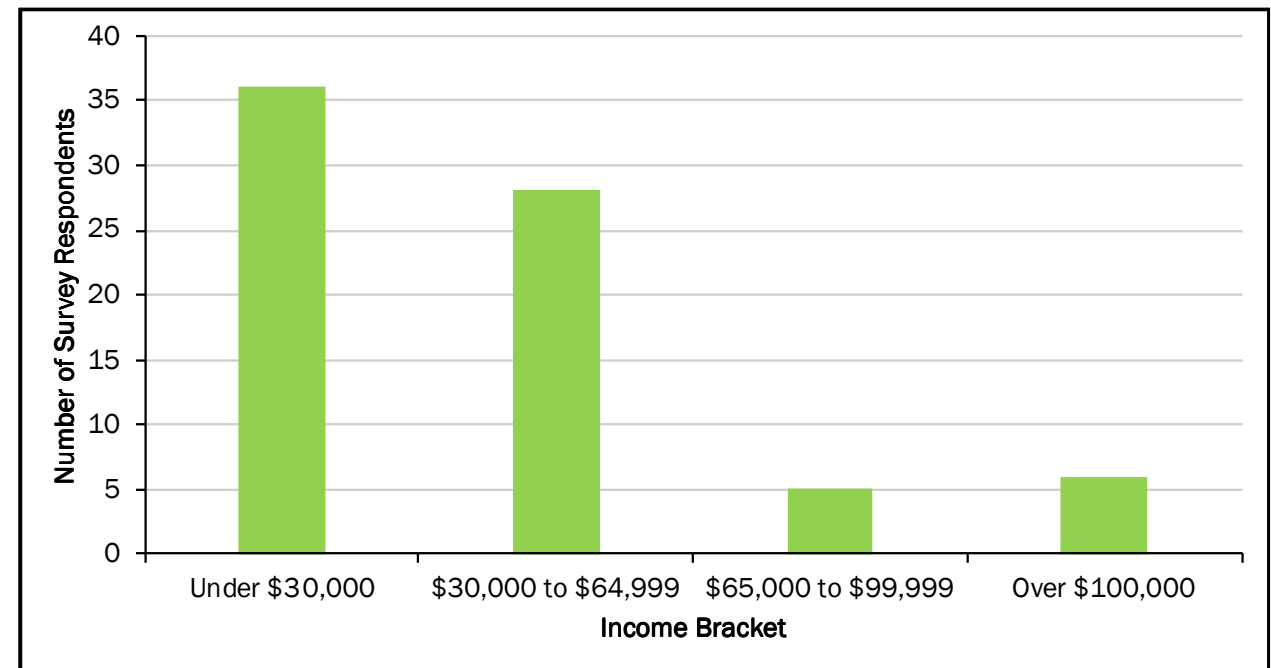
Do you identify as: (you may select more than one answer.)



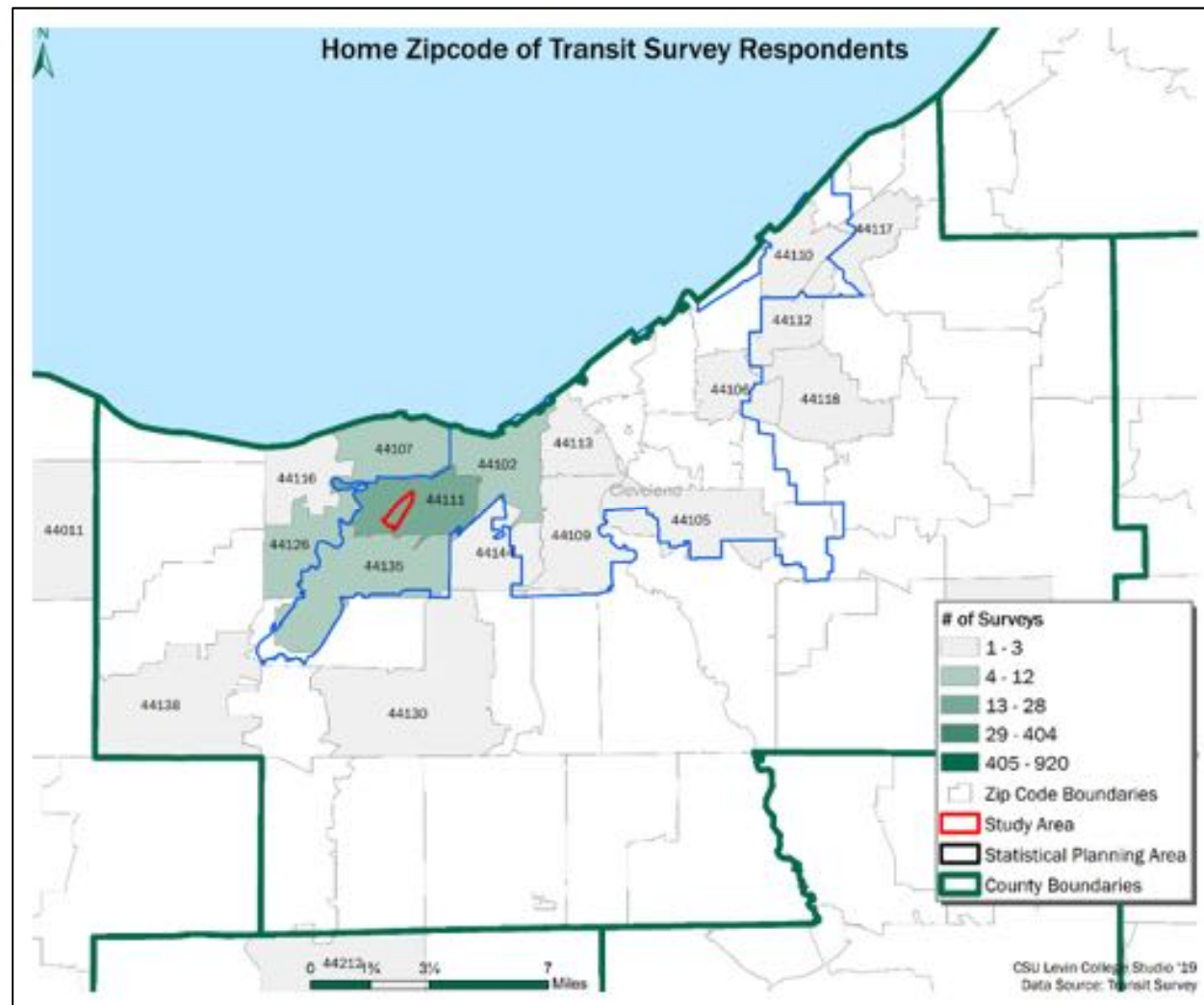
Do you identify as:



What is your approximate household income?

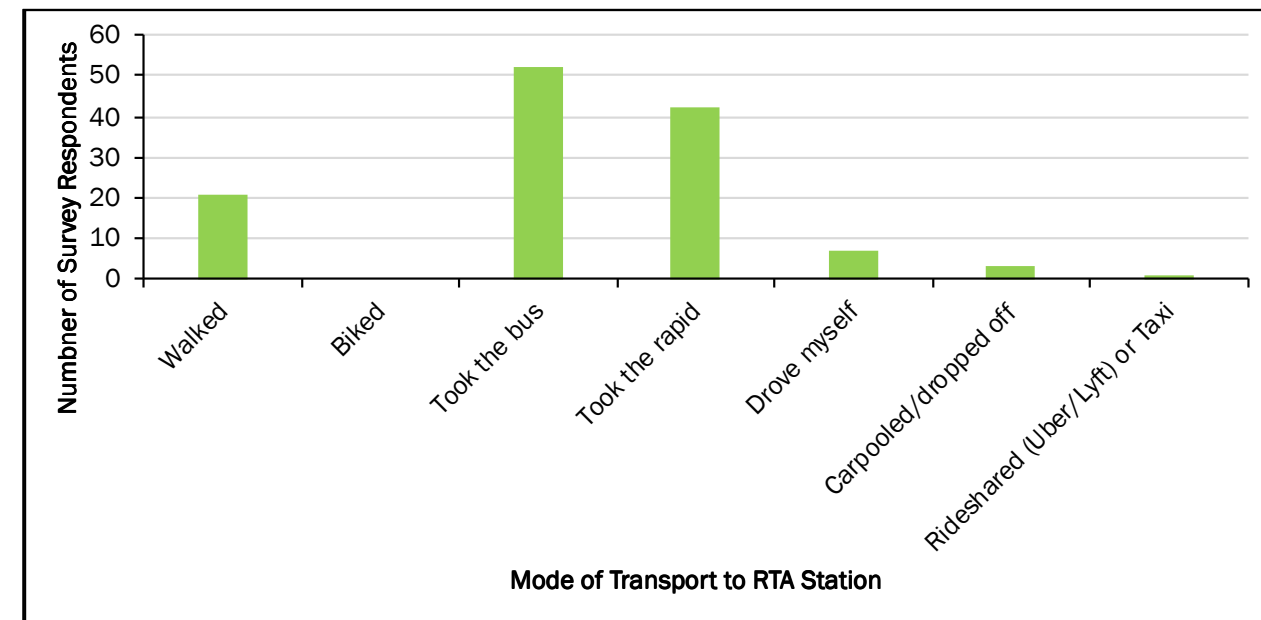


Zip codes of survey respondents

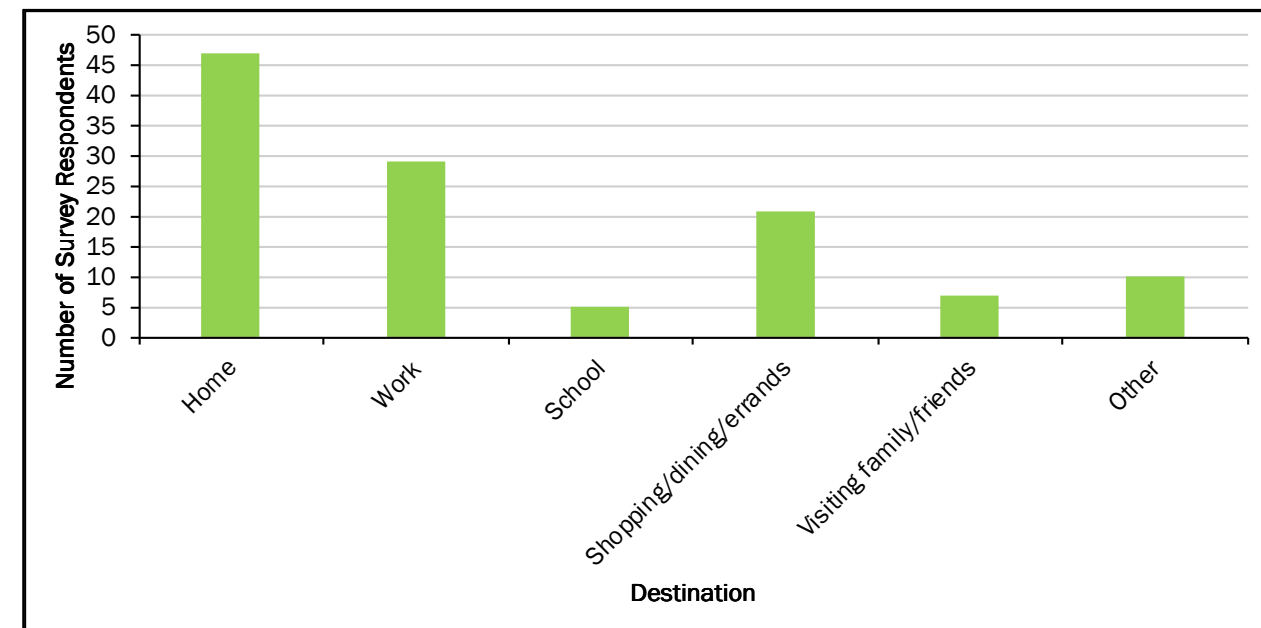


Preferences:

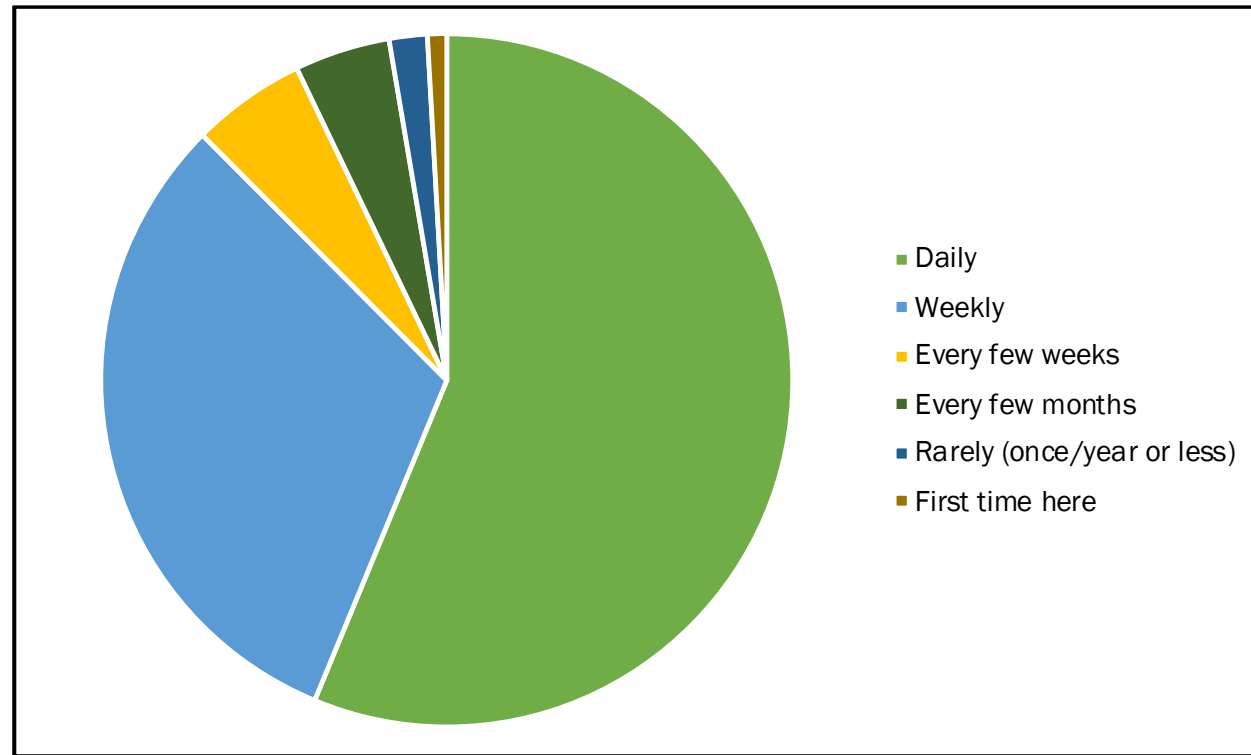
How did you get to the Rapid Station today? Check all that apply.



Where are you headed right now? Check all that apply.



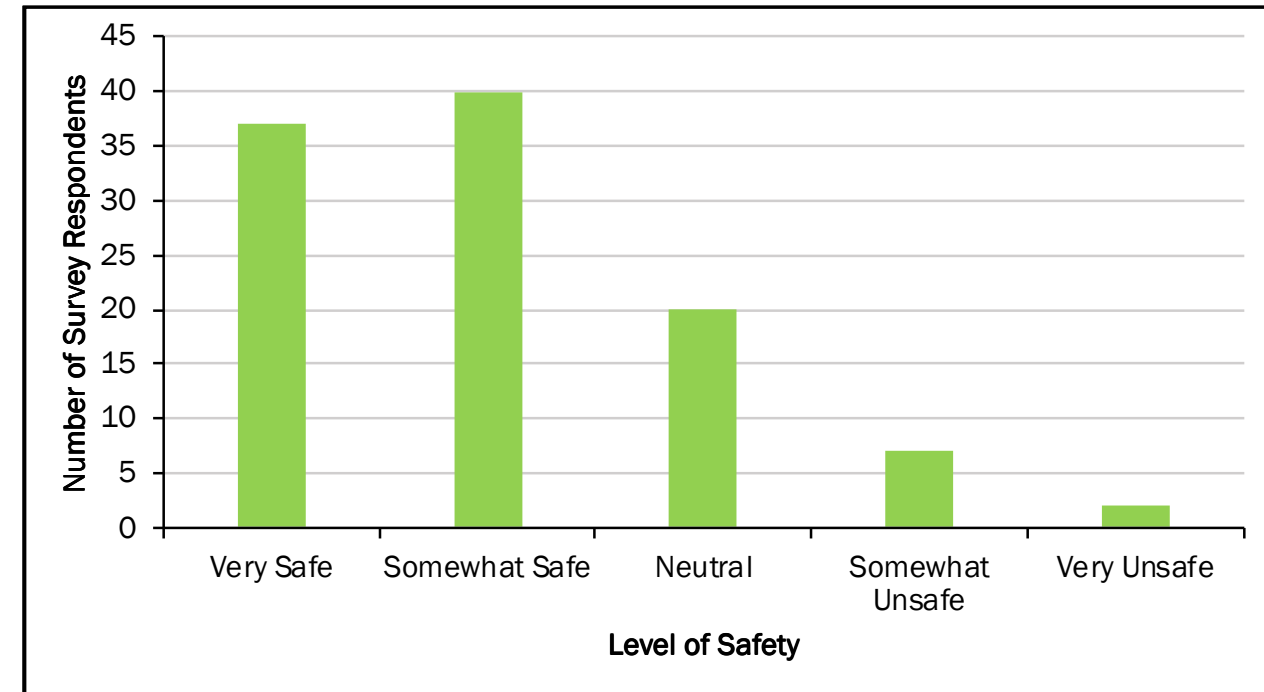
How frequently do you use/visit this station? Check all that apply.



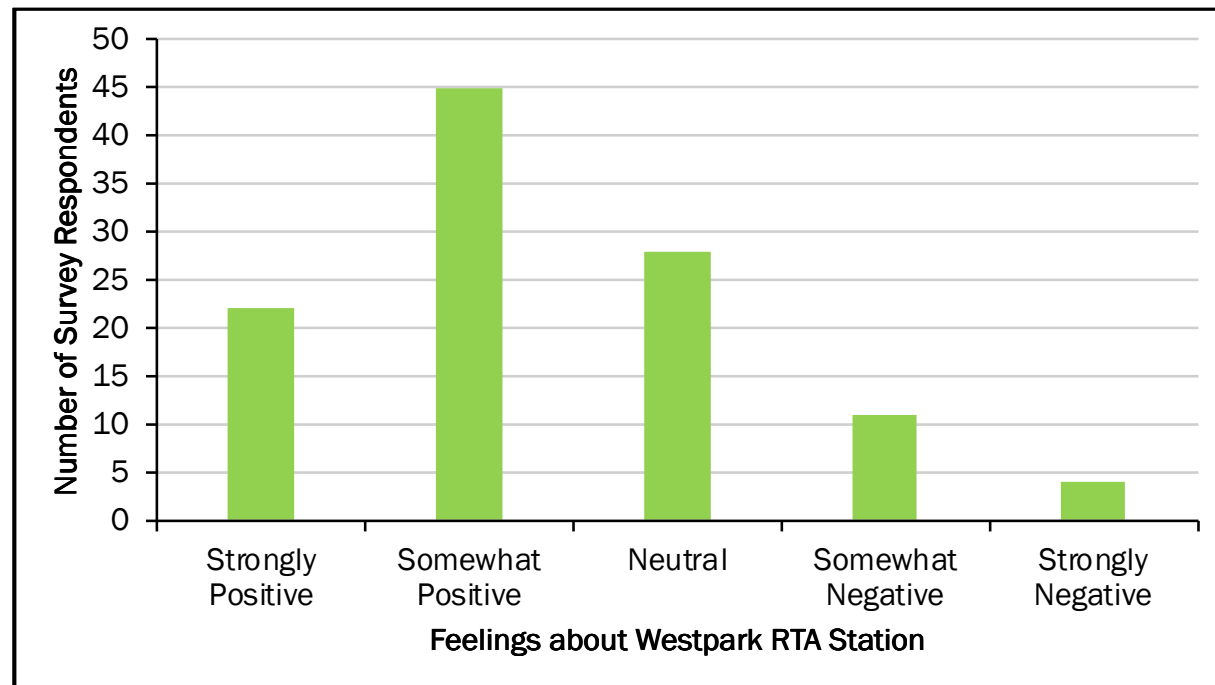
What would make the station easier to get to?

More frequent buses, other buses being on time, better planning of parking lot and traffic patterns

How safe do you feel at this station when you use it?



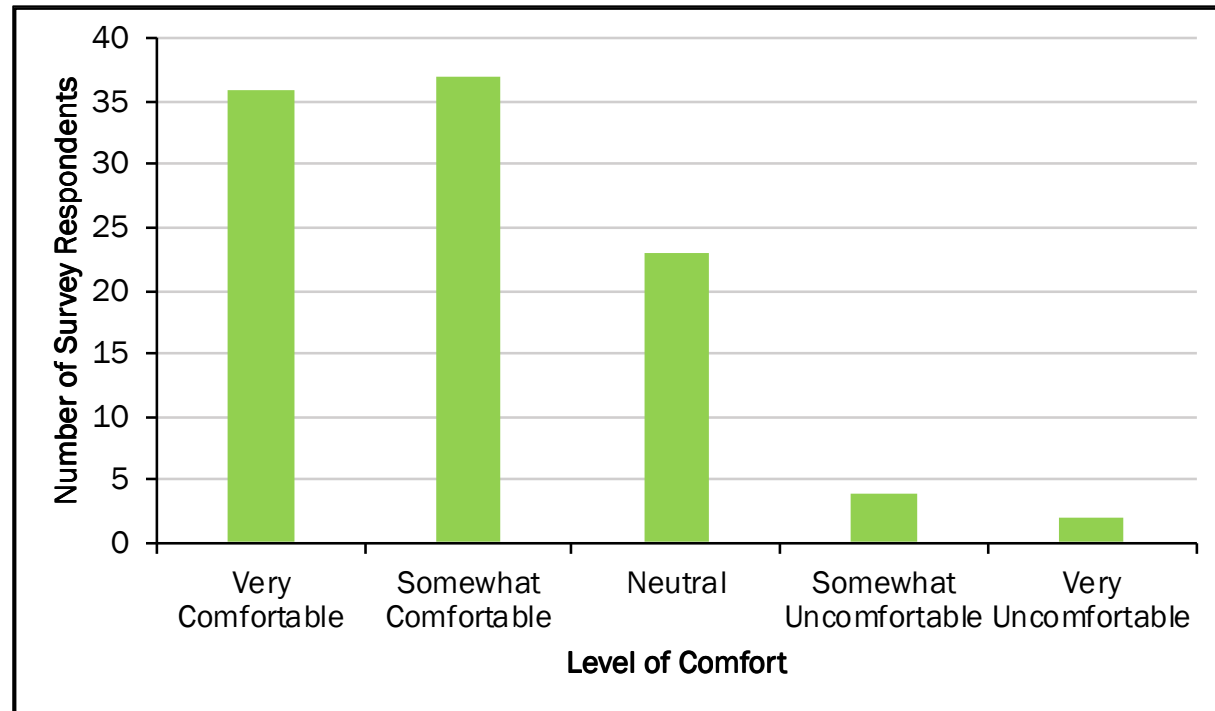
What is your overall feeling about this station?



What would make you feel safer at this station?

More transit police/greater security presence, less transient population (homeless people/"bums"), better shelter options for riders, less loitering

How would you rate your level of physical comfort at this station?



What would make you feel more comfortable at this station?

Restrooms, improved seating, television, water fountain, vending machine, security, cleanliness, more lighting, smoking section somewhere on platform

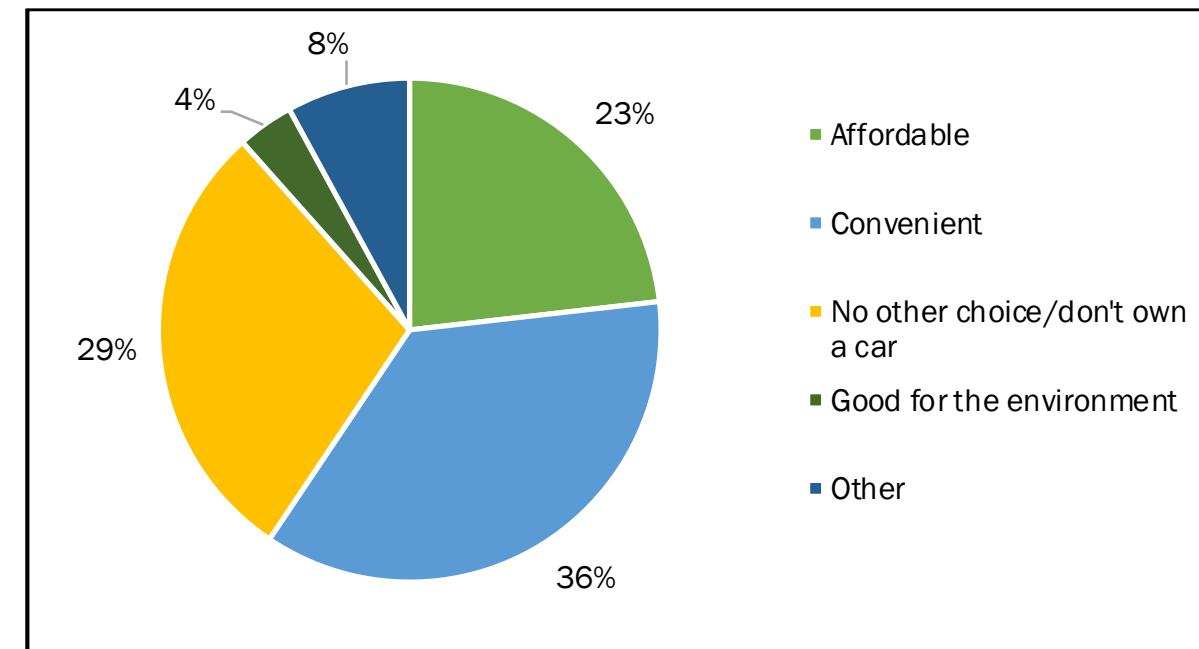
What are two things you would like to do at the West Park Station that you can't do now?

Bathroom, snack bar (vending machines), WiFi, functioning machine for ticket purchases, coffee, Walmart

What are some things you wish were at the West Park Station, but currently are not available?

Bus schedules, bathroom, coffee, better/more seating options, televisions, security, security, wifi, purchase tickets at kiosk

Why do you ride the bus and/or Rapid? Please check all that apply.



Appendix II: Stakeholder Interview Questions

Introduction

1. How familiar are you with the study area and the broader West Park neighborhood? (Based on what experiences?)
2. When you think of West Park, what comes to mind?
3. How has the neighborhood changed since you have known it?
4. If any, what memory or feeling from West Park would you want captured in any new development?

Wanted and Unwanted Uses

5. What do you see as the neighborhood's strengths and assets?
6. What do you see as the neighborhood's current challenges and weaknesses?
7. What do you believe is missing from the neighborhood? What could it use more of? What could it use less of?

Real Estate and Finance

8. West Park has a legacy of being historical and middle class. What kind of new development(s) would help retain current residents and jobs as well as attract new residents and jobs to the neighborhood?
9. What development hurdles specific to sites in the study area might be cost prohibitive?
10. Are there any unique sources of financing that sites within the area might be eligible for?
11. What are some recent trends you are seeing in terms of housing, business or other issues relevant to redevelopment?

Recommendations

12. If you had a magic wand and money was unlimited, what would you want for this area of West Park?
13. How would you maximize the development potential of the study area using the Lorain Ave. corridor, the vacant Kmart Plaza, and/or the West Park RTA Station as central foci?
14. Is there anything we did not discuss that you think we should consider in developing our plan for the area?
15. Would you be interested in attending our final event where we will be presenting the plan?

Appendix III: Retail Niche Analysis

Category	Total SQFT Supported	Less Existing SQFT	Total Gap in SQFT	Avg Establishment Size in SQFT	Total No. Stores Needed
Retail/Food Services					
Restaurants (full-service)	57,794	30,000	27,794	3,000	9.26
Computer/Software Stores	34,401	2,000	32,401	5,000	6.48
Convenience/Gas Station	38,529	22,500	16,029	2,500	6.41
Automotive Parts/Accessories/Tires	36,121	5,000	31,121	5,000	6.22
Sewing, Fabric, and Craft Stores	9,030	1,000	8,030	1,500	5.35
Shoe Stores	12,456	2,000	10,456	2,000	5.23
Household Appliances	49,823	5,000	44,823	10,000	4.48
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	149,468	60,000	89,468	20,000	4.47
Books/periodicals, and music	13,893	5,000	8,893	2,000	4.45
Clothing Stores	48,162	7,000	41,162	10,000	4.12
Office Supplies/Stationary	24,911	2,000	22,911	6,000	3.82
Hobby, Toy, and Game Stores	14,449	3,000	11,449	3,000	3.82
Retail Bakeries	7,525	2,000	5,525	1,500	3.68
Restaurants (fast food)	24,081	15,000	9,081	2,500	3.63
Grocery Stores	197,026	100,000	97,026	30,000	3.23
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	16,419	10,000	6,419	2,000	3.21
Paint/Wallpaper	10,320	6,000	4,320	2,000	2.16
Other home furnishing stores	40,135	20,000	20,135	10,000	2.01
Building/Garden Material/Supplies	45,152	30,000	15,152	10,000	1.52
Jewelry Stores	3,386	2,000	1,386	1,000	1.39
Floor Covering Stores	10,034	6,000	4,034	3,000	1.34
Other miscellaneous retailers	9,632	8,000	1,632	2,000	0.82
Bars and Taverns	31,410	30,000	1,410	2,000	0.70
Used merchandise/antiques/vintage	9,030	7,000	2,030	3,000	0.68
Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters	98,513	-	98,513	150,000	0.66
Sporting Goods and Bicycles	9,506	4,000	5,506	10,000	0.55
Furniture Stores	16,419	15,000	1,419	3,000	0.47
Specialty Food Services	20,067	20,000	67	1,000	0.07
Florists	7,740	8,000	(260)	1,500	-0.17